

HEURISTIC

ISSUE #2



KISS IT GOODBYE

EMBODYMENT

NINE IRON SPITFIRE

REVIEWS

COLUMNS

MORE

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Issue

#2

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DISTRIBUTION

I am always looking for more distribution. Help me take over the world by distributing Heuristic fanzine at shows in your area. Rates are simple: \$10 gets you 20 zines, you sell them for \$1 a piece, you make 100% profit and we all win. Zines will be sold only in multiples of 10 with a minimum order of 20 (this way postage doesn't knock me into the hole). Absolutely positively, no consignment. Any questions regarding pricing please get in touch.

REVIEWS

Please send all music reviews on CD format if possible, but any format (save 8-tracks) will do just dandy. Zines please include a sheet stating title, issue#, and page count. I will do my very best to see that all submissions are reviewed but no guarantees.

ADVERTISING

Please get in touch for information.

OTHER PROJECTS

Well, my band Jeremin finally finished up our 7". It is available through King of the Monsters Records for \$3 ppd. (see ad). Also I have been working on a series of quarter-size diaries entitled "All Lies and Jest". Number one is the tour diary I kept with Overcome during the summer of 1996. Number two will be a weekend road trip some friends and I took to San Diego earlier this year. All Lies and Jest #1 is available for \$1 ppd. within the U.S.A. (#2 will be finished later this year). Lastly, I have a limited amount of Heuristic issue #1's left, if you don't have it already this may be your last opportunity. Send \$2 ppd. within the U.S.A. and I'll mail one out to you right away.

THANKS TO

All contributing writers and photographers, all distributors, all those who have submitted items for review, bands interviewed, friends, and family. ...



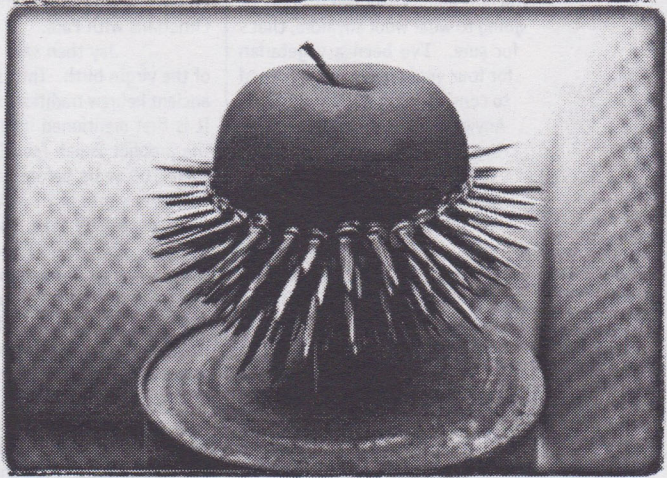
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disclaimer. . .

The information expressed within these pages is loosely based around 1997. This is the time frame in which the columns were gathered, interviews held, and personal writings recorded. For the obscenely belated release I make no apologies. I will not whine about obstacles impeding my progress or diversions of any sort. I will simply explain that this information is not current and should not be taken as such. Instead of moving on or updating, however, I chose to publish this issue as planned.

These ideas

may not be current, but they represent an important part of my life, one that I am proud to share with you. Better to finish it up and move on with a



clear conscience than to drop it altogether.

From this point on you will find a variety of opinions - some presented by myself, and some by others. My motivation for collecting and publishing these ideas is not to fling a lasso around your neck and coerce you into adopting my views (or those of any other parties given a voice within these pages) it is rather to present issues that deserve recognition and consideration and to give your brain a little something to chew on. Some you may adopt, some you may discard, but you will have made a choice, and inherently taken a step forward. That is all that I ask - that you read without prejudice and pave your own path with the decisions you make. Create, confront, analyze, express yourself, and grow. The choice is - and always has been - yours. . .

TO THE EDITOR

letters

Cori,

Hi there, I hope you remember me, I'm Alexis, Joshua's (from Strongarm) girlfriend. I finished reading your zine yesterday and I just thought I'd tell you how much I enjoyed it. I'm not going to wear wool anymore, that's for sure. I've been a vegetarian for four years but, never stopped to consider the wool thing before. Anyway, keep those issues coming.

Another reason I wrote was to clear up a little misunderstanding in your interview with Jay. Nathan asked Jay if he believes that Christ used men to write the Bible. Jay replies by saying that the Bible is not pure. I assume by this he means that there have been many translations over the centuries, and this is certainly true. However, if you or I read Hebrew or Greek than this would be a non-issue. The same would apply to the Vedic writings - they are in Sanskrit or Hindi and need to be translated into english for Jay to read. Scholars may disagree on how to translate a word here or there but, it doesn't mean the Vedic writings aren't "pure".

Then Jay says that much of what Christianity is today came from Paul. That's not totally accurate. The New Testament is made up of three kinds of writings: 1. The Gospels - which were historical accounts of Christ's life as told by his disciples. These books are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. None of these were written by Paul and it is from these books we get most of our information about Jesus. 2.

The Epistles - these books are teaching, doctrinal and instructional guides. Many of

these were written by Paul, but not all of them. Jay seems to express that these writings aren't valid because Paul became a disciple after Jesus' resurrection and wasn't around as long as the original twelve disciples. I don't see why this bothers him since Jay follows Prabhupada. Prabhupada is certainly not an original disciple of Krishna but, Krishnas believe him to be an enlightened teacher. The same for Christians with Paul.

Jay then says that Paul came up with the idea of the virgin birth. This isn't true. The virgin birth was an ancient hebrew tradition of how the messiah would be born. It is first mentioned in the Bible in the Old Testament by the prophet Isaiah (see Isaiah 7:14 if you're so inclined) some 700 years before Jesus or Paul. In the New Testament the virgin birth is described by several different authors, especially Luke, and these were all before Paul.

My final (I promise) point of contradiction is where Jay says Jesus' brother didn't talk about the virgin birth. Jesus' brother, Jude, wrote a small epistle which was a letter to the Jewish Christians in Israel and Judah. He is specifically responding to philosophical questions asked by Jewish Christians of that time who were debating another group called the Gnostics. Jude is responding to their specific questions and the fact that he doesn't mention the virgin birth doesn't really matter. In fact, most Epistles don't mention the virgin birth because the virgin birth (for Christians) is a historical event recorded in the Gospels and isn't necessary in the teachings and philosophical instructions, such as the Epistles.

Oh one more thing: Jesus does not condemn nor uphold meat-eating. The first book of the Bible says that man has been made a "steward" of the earth and animals. A steward is a care taker, like a gardener. By polluting the earth we are bad care takers, and it is my personal conviction that to care for animal means that you shouldn't treat it cruelly. If others disagree - that is there prerogative and I certainly wouldn't condemn them for it.

Anyway, I've said my peice *whew*. I hope I didn't sound too angry because I'm really not, just fired up. As a 'zine writer I try to always put forth reliable information and I thought you might like to know these things.

Well, I'm gonna go pick wild strawberries for lunch. Yum.

→ Love and Blessings,

Alexis

Dear Cori,

If this letter seems rude or bitter, don't take it personally, I'm just in a shitty mood at the moment. Hydra Head will not advertise in your zine, nor will I send you promos. I assume that since you are in Overcome that you too are Christian, which would make your zine a Christian zine. I also gathered from your writings, however vague they are, had a religious slant to them. Now I believe that you have every right to voice your opinion, however ridiculous I may find it to be, but I do not wish to support your voice, or affiliate Hydra Head with any of the ideas you support by contributing to your zine. I think that religion in hardcore sucks and only adds to the deterioration of the scene as a movement, but this is only my opinion and should have no bearing on you or your efforts. If I am wrong in assuming you are Christian and your zine having a religious slant, please call me on my shit, otherwise please do not contact me again about advertising. Sorry to piss on your parade, but for me and for Hydra Head, religion and hardcore just don't mix.

Take care,

Aaron
Hydra Head Records

Aaron,

First off, I would like to thank you for taking the time to actually read through my zine. The points your letter touched on prove that you didn't simply skim through it, and that is appreciated. Yes, the intro to the Overcome interview stated that I was filling in for them. This was a three month favor I did for four kids I grew up with when they needed my help. Did I enjoy it? Yes. Am I a Christian? Most certainly not. I am surprised and curious to know what writings struck you as "religiously slanted" but they are vague enough that you can extract from them what you'd like to. As far as religion in hardcore is concerned, well... religion is not something I'm fond of nor is it something I support. Interviewing a Christian band is supporting religion you might say? Maybe, however I see it more as a valuable exchange of information. Christianity is a phenomenon that intrigues me and I don't apologize for including Overcome's interview in my zine. I would be ashamed to present a piece of literature that rehashed old ideas and catered strictly to one narrow division of thought. I've never attempted to blacklist an idea out of hardcore because I believe that hardcore's most valuable asset is its open network of communication, and its uncensored exchange of ideas. Maybe I'm different than others, but I find the opposition's argument as valuable as the allies. It's a learning process that tempers your con-



victions and tests your stances, and if Heuristic fanzine does nothing else I hope it does that, because we sure as hell know that most kids don't know what they believe. Rather than delivering a straight line of my own beliefs, I try to toss out all kinds of ideas, shake kids up and make them think for themselves (god forbid the notion) as opposed to giving them something consistent to accept without question. Lastly, I did not ask for you to send me promos, nor did I proposition a purchase of advertising space. I offered a favor to an entity that I appreciate and would like to support. I simply saw an opportunity to open a new line of communication, and to offer a service. Please forgive me for wasting your time.

Corianton Hale
Heuristic Fanzine

UTOPIAN IDEALISM

Yesterday a co-worker asked me what my definition of a utopian society would be. I was surprised at how quickly I responded. My hypothesis was that if the entire human race embraced just two simple ideals, then a peaceful and universally beneficial lifestyle would saturate the earth, nudging our existence as close to a utopia as humanly possible. Ideal number one: If all human beings would see their actions through to their fullest effects. This means taking the initiative to investigate the effects of all your actions, on our mother earth, on mankind, and on our non-human earth dwellers. The adoption of this simple concept would eliminate strip mining, clear cropping, deforestation, precious topsoil erosion, o-zone depletion—the list is endless. All of the shortsighted and selfish barbarism that has and continues to ravage what remains of a life-supporting ecosystem would be abolished, completely gone. No more blinders on the eyes of supermarket shoppers, an end to the evasion of issues the average human is oblivious to, i.e. factory farming, vivisection, the fur industry, the pet trade, etc. This is if people give a rat's ass about the effects their investigation reveals, right? Which brings us to ideal number two: If all human beings were instilled with a sincere caring and respect for all life, regardless of race, culture, or species. If everyone looked out for the interests of life other than their own, imagine the ramifications. Say goodbye to meat eating, say goodbye to dairy and egg consumption, watch the sordid manifestations of racism, sexism, homophobia and speciesism slowly wither up and die. An end to violence, crime, rape, the list is endless. By adopting a vegan diet humans would live longer, healthier lives, and less effort would be squandered on health

care and treating self-inflicted ailments. Imagine if all forms of life were given equal consideration, and malignant interference with the natural order was unheard of, extinct. Idealist rambling? You betcha. . .

DIY VS. SHIT

Do-it-yourself. The essential ethic that sets hardcore apart from an apathetic culture. The unifying thread that networks across the world and unites us in communication. The tool that teaches us the strength of ideas and the satisfaction gained from setting those ideas into motion with our own two hands. The DIY ethic has played an important role in my life and in the discovery of my own personal strength, and through my involvement in hardcore I have felt a terrific sense of empowerment. However, I feel like a lot of kids are misunderstanding the concept. Last time I checked DIY meant do-it-yourself, not make-it-look-like-a-big-stinky-turd. If your will is to make your project look like ass, then so be it - it doesn't concern me. What does concern me however is those who reject quality products in an effort to preserve their own personal idea of DIY - i.e. boycotting 7"s with full color glossy covers, saying "That's not hardcore." So I present to you my stance: If one has the will and the means by which to create quality professional-looking products, then they should take advantage of those opportunities. What fault lies in doing so? Why are ten-minute Kinko's slob-jobs hailed as DIY while creative and quality-packaged products get the shaft? The whole basis of doing it yourself is to put your heart into it right? Shitty no-effort projects are done independently, of course, but seriously - where's the heart? Is somebody missing the point? Like I said, that's awesome if you prefer hand-screenprinting over professional printing, but why boycott someone's work because it doesn't fit your narrow little definition of "what hardcore should look like." I really don't care for glossy covers or 4-color printing, but that's my personal taste, not an absurd rulebook limitation. If there's something I'm missing please write me and let me know because I really don't get it. (Keep in mind I'm not talking barcodes,

distribution, etc. I'm talking about boycotting products based solely on their appearance.)

OLD GLORY - THE AMERICAN FLAG AND ME

Field trips. The highest form of education and the anticipation of students across the world, longing for fresh air and hands-on leaning experience. This semester my college drawing class scheduled a field trip to the Phoenix Art Museum, to behold a controversial exhibit that had been permeating the papers for weeks; Old Glory being the title, and the subject being the American flag and it's manifestation in the wonderful world of art. The exhibit's graphic and disrespectful representations of the American flag had earned the museum quite a mass of media attention, and prompted many local veteran groups and patriots to demonstrate, protest, and voice their outrage at the museum gates. This was an event not to be missed.

My class and I gathered at the North entrance, 8:45 AM, and proceeded into the museum led by our instructor and a museum security official. When we reached the Old Glory exhibit we were set free to explore the many creations before us. The first to capture my attention was a pop-art style image of a hooded Klansman holding a newborn babe painted upon a 12 foot tall American flag; A bold statement on the racism still contaminating America. Next, a four-sided box with mirrored walls - on the floor laid row upon row of American flag-draped coffins which stretched indefinitely in all directions; to me symbolizing the infinite war-related deaths so far and yet to come. Next, and my personal favorite, was a small wooden-framed quilt of the flag, or so it seemed. A closer look revealed an astonishing discovery. The plaque explained the project as a patch-work representation, the medium, human skin - stripes fashioned in the flesh of black and white Americans both aged to subtle shades of brown, but still distinguishable, and stars precisely crafted from the skin of various other races. A discerning eye could detect pores and hair follicles withered and dry but still in

place. Faces turned pale as stomachs were clutched and students scurried away in their bright new leather shoes. The specific installation that incited the most outrage was a shiny porcelain toilet inside of a phone booth sized jail cell, and an American flag draped half-in and half-out of the bile receptacle. Numerous attempts to snatch the flag out of the cell had been made during the week's demonstrations and many protesters had been removed from the premises for their unacceptable remonstrance. The last piece of the exhibit was a poignant challenge to all. Against the wall was a large book mounted on a ledge for the comments of museum observers. On the floor, expanding just beyond arms reach around the book was placed an American flag - like a rug. The challenge: Do you have something to say? If so are you personally willing to tread upon the flag to do so? And so the people's will is challenged and their role is heightened from the level of observant to participant.

There is, undoubtedly, an enormous gap between the old and the young of this age's perception of the American flag. Kids today simply aren't instilled with the same connection between flag and country as that of the previous generation. Most adults see that flag as a representation of their freedom, the freedom that they and their forefathers risked (and lost) their lives defending. I feel that my generation depicts the flag as a symbol of government, of corruption and the scandalous pursuit of political power. To us it is a symbol of everything that's wrong with our lives, and it is far from sacred. The American flag is a symbol, but for what? Freedom? The Republic? Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? All of the above? I'm not so sure there is a correct answer anymore. Whether you're the Vietnam veteran wiping a tear from his eye on the cover of the Arizona Republic, or a museum-goer scrawling com

ments in a book and trudging dirt across the face of the Star Spangled Banner, I'm not sure our ultimate goals are actually so different. The controversy lies in a symbol, and the various perceptions of that symbol which has the potential to be misinterpreted and misused. I'm not here to tell anyone what the American flag should mean to him or her, because I don't know that it needs one universal meaning. Isn't being an American about diversity? I do however think we could get a lot more accomplished if we spent less time bickering over a symbol and a little more effort into working for specific goals, many of which we all share.

IF PATIENCE IS TOLERANCE

Today I spent a few minutes pondering the specific differences between the words patience and tolerance, initially seeming synonymous. Dictionary definitions will describe both as the will or ability to endure without complaint. Well, patience is a virtue that I do indeed strive for—tolerance on the other hand I do not. Explanation: My feelings are that patience implies calmness, an ability to dissuade discouragement while working towards a goal. Tolerance, on the other hand, to me implies observing, yet ignoring. Overlooking unpleasant situations and moving on. If a friend displays actions you perceive as harmful to themselves or others I believe it is your responsibility as a friend to confront that individual and explain your concern. Tolerance would have you ignoring the actions and making no productive effort to rectify the situation. If a friend is struggling with the adoption of a new lifestyle, for example, one beneficial to themselves and those around them then patience is exactly the behavior to adopt. Support and attention will lend strength to your friend's efforts. If a friend indulges in activities which threaten to harm themselves or others, gossiping, negativity, etc. then tolerating the behavior is only hurting that friend. Intolerance doesn't mean being elitist or disrespectful, it simply means not ignoring actions which you view as wrong. Bringing issues to the surface for discussion. Tolerance is not friendship, it is apathy. Patience for those climb-

ing, and no tolerance for those pushing others down.

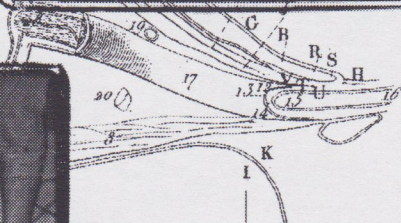
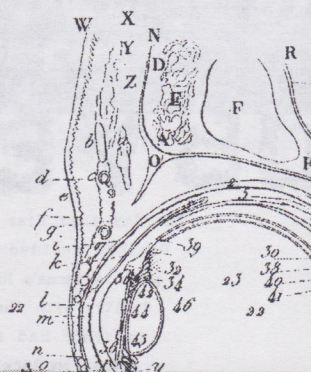
HARDCORE IS A SLAP IN THE FACE

Hardcore is a gauntlet of life experience continually belting you into reality. An arena of affliction and triumph, hitting you where it hurts and testing the limits of your endurance. It is a handful of wisdom, lovingly delivered by a fist to the gut. Hardcore is mouthful of gravel that grinds your teeth and shreds your gums but you continue to chew relentlessly because you love the sound it makes. Hardcore is a powerful force that brings people together under common ideas and convictions, and rips them apart the second those ideas shift. It brings one to trust another, to call him or her his brother or sister, and places us in danger of being destroyed by disappointment. Hardcore holds people accountable for their actions. It is the motivation and it is revolution. Hardcore gives security to the misunderstood and strength to the meek. It inspires individuals to express their everything, and creates a forum for feedback and discussion. It is a cry for you to open your eyes and never let them shut. It is the impulse to learn what's wrong and to do something about it. It is a pair of gargantuan hands snatching you up from your warm spot by the fire and tossing you out into a blizzard as your hear the door slam shut and lock behind you. Hardcore is a step into the real world and a haven from it. Hardcore is living, and hardcore is feeling. It gives us something to believe in and makes the world seem worth saving. It gives us strength, and it gives us hope, and without these we have nothing at all...



coalesce

by bobby canaday



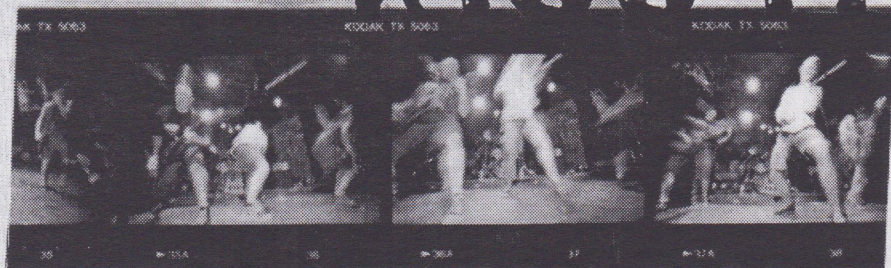
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by jeremie dyer



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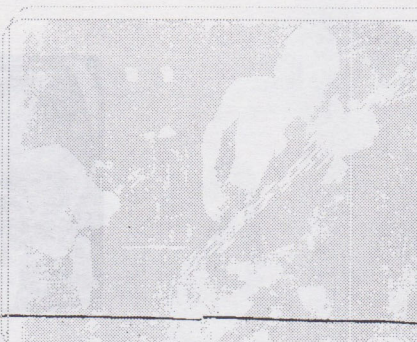
kiss it



GOODBYE

The day that Kiss It Goodbye decided to grace Arizona's Nile Theatre with their presence had arrived. My lack of preparation had me decided against an interview, but when I realized that my buddy Brendan was old friends with Keith (maniacal guitarist and part-time skateboarder) and was willing to help me out with questions I decided to go for it. The following text is the conversation that took place between Keith, Tim (vocalist and King of Sarcasm), myself, and Brendan who asked all the good questions and deserves the credit. . .

all photography by jason hellman



Brendan: Alright, bring it. . . you got it on?

Cori: Yeah, it's on.

Brendan: Alright. Well, we were talking earlier about Revelation and I was interested in how Revelation treats their bands and how they're treating Kiss it Goodbye, so rehash a little. . .

Keith: Revelation has been nothing but golden to us. They helped us buy a van, they gave us plenty of money to record with, and I think the new record sounds killer. It beats the shit out of any recordings Rorschach ever did, and destroys the shit we did with Deadguy as well. They're just great to us, anything we ask for they're there to help us and they don't ask that much of us except that we be a band for them.

Cori: Have they laid out any guidelines that you're required to follow, for touring, or—

Keith: They don't have any guidelines for tour [*he ponders for a moment in an attempt to remember what the contract said about touring*]. I'll definitely admit, the contracts are kind of scary because they're in legalese and I can't understand what the hell they're saying. We took a long time and had to get a lawyer and go through the whole serious rigmarole and everything.

Brendan: Didn't that make it seem a little bit impersonal, that you had to go get a lawyer?

Keith: It's impersonal, but it's safer. Tim nor I have ever signed anything with Victory records, and

all we've gotten is a big fist in the ass from them. We've gotten one piece of vinyl each and five CD's, and I don't think that's quite fair, and every time we call Victory we get put on hold for forty-five minutes and then we just get mad and hang up.

Brendan: So it's a trade off, impersonality for a little bit of protection.

Keith: After being burned, I'm all for it. That was blood sweat and tears in that fucking record.

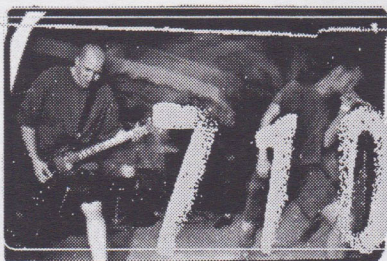
Brendan: And a lot of copies of that thing have been sold.

Keith: Damn straight. Last time I was told that they sound scanned about 5,000 copies, and anybody in the industry will tell you that it's more than likely sold four times that through Mom and Pop stores. So a rough estimate would be about 20,000 copies sold and I get thirty-five dollars worth of merchandise? I kind of feel stiffed. Anyways, guidelines. . . I think they ask for a tour per record, but that's like asking us to breath, it's just gonna happen. It's nothing strict or ridiculous. I think Revelation is really into us because we work really hard. Before we moved out to Seattle we played twenty-five shows in about three months. We were the weekend warriors, played a lot of shows, made a big-ass stink about ourselves, flyers everywhere, demos in stores, basically forced people to know that we were there. I think Revelation was really impressed by that.

Cori: So why did you guys just pick up and move to Seattle?

Keith: Well, Tim and his girlfriend had been planning to move to Seattle since about five years ago, and by the time they were actually ready to move Tim had joined Deadguy and that kept him back. Once Deadguy broke up Tim's like, "I'm going to Seattle, that's it." I had a shell of a life so I said I'd go, and the other guys that joined Kiss it Goodbye knew from the start that the whole band was based about going to Seattle

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and they were down with it. And that's that.

Brendan: You were saying that you liked the idea that you're seeing the record on college music charts.

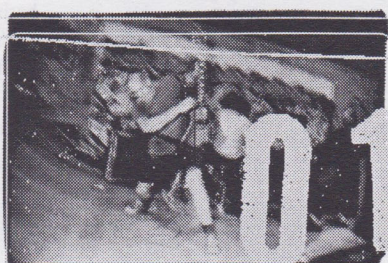
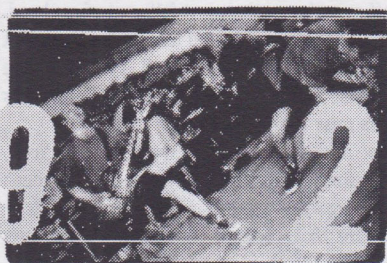
Keith: Well, right now we're touring with the Unsane, and dealing with booking agents and clubs as opposed to DIY shows, and I'm not slagging any of that, but it's new and it's easier. I don't know if that makes me look like I'm not putting anything back into the scene, or if I'm just an old lazy piece of shit, but it makes our life a lot easier. We just have to worry about playing, delivering a killer show, and we're not stressed out, stopping at every rest stop, making a million phone calls, making sure Joey Dimwit in fucking Debuque, Iowa flyered for the show so at least six kids show up so we'll have gas to get to the next show. It's cool that people do this, but kids book you just cause they want to see you, and Brendan, I know you've definitely experienced this on tour [*Brendan nods in agreement*] they don't take the time to think that—

Brendan: More people than just their neighbors need to show up to the show.

Keith: Yeah, this band needs to eat, and get to the next show. Not to get a hotel with a pool, just to at least sustain. There was too many times when Rorschach played and afterwards a kid comes up looking all sad handing us twenty bucks, and it's like, fuck. . . we all quit our jobs, we can't afford this. That's why so many bands break up. When money becomes an issue, bands get stressed, bands fight, bands break up. But that was a whole different diatribe than what I started to say, but college radio - it's cool to see our record doing well, because it's reflected at our shows, kids are coming up to us at shows, saying they heard us on the radio, and it's getting beyond hardcore which is really cool because I'm beyond hardcore. I love my Negative Approach records, I love it all, but I also listen to my P.J. Harvey and Cranberries records. It's cool to see other kids into heavy music, death metal kids, grind kids, kids who are really sick for bands like Unsane and Today is the Day who don't really have a niche cut out for them starting to get into us. It's like hey, there's something out there, it's brutal, it's heavy, it's not straight up hardcore, like verse/chorus/verse/chorus/mosh part/verse/chorus/out—

Cori: Thank God.

Keith: Yeah, I couldn't do it, I'd just shoot myself in the fucking neck. We've got formulas though, this band is definitely more straight-forward than Rorschach or Deadguy was, and the songs are long and huge, and they



breath a lot more. Everybody shines at what they do.

Brendan: How about the video?

Keith: That's actually gonna be out in a few months. There's a couple of guys that do a cable access show in New York called Monkey Butt Sex and it's awesome. They interview bands and they spice it with live footage. They filmed out last CB's show, and we're ending our tour at CB's again so they're filming that too so if it comes out as good as I expect it to then Revelation's probably gonna put it out on some sampler video, send it to record stores and skate shops.

Brendan: This is not destined for MTV is it now?

Keith: No not at all. We say "fuck" in the songs so we're not allowed.

Cori: Do you guys have any specific goal in mind and far as a level of success or popularity?

Keith: Oh, total world domination.

Brendan: The Kiss it Goodbye world domination tour!

Keith: Seriously, we just want everyone in the world to know who we are whether they love us or hate us.

Cori: Say MTV decided to overlook the profanity and air your video would you be into it?

Keith: I wouldn't give a shit. I don't care, if they want to put us on, great, help my cause.

Cori: Or kill it.

Keith: I'm willing to take any propaganda that people are willing to give me. We're just for guys about being a band, about music. Our

lyrics are socio-political, they're basically just Tim's experiences. Like I said we're not a straight up hardcore band, there's not your homelessness song, your straight edge song, your this song, your that song. Every song is about Tim's interactions with people.

Brendan: Where is Tim coming from? Because Tim's lyrics are fucking insane, they're really deep. It does seem like there are a lot of messages there, they're not the cookie-cutter issues that most hardcore bands address, but it seems that they do touch on a lot of issues, like religion, family life. . .

Keith: Well, these are his problems not mine, so I kind of feel like I'm stepping over my bounds but he's not here, so. . . He had a fucked up childhood and he draws a lot from that. There's songs that he took from incidents when he was five years old, how he felt as a five year old being placed in certain situations. However people read into it is how they read into it. He tries to make it clear enough that you've got an idea, but it's personal to him so he doesn't want all of his laundry out to dry. It's better for people to derive their own conclusions anyway. He's told us some personal shit about a specific song on the Deadguy record and I can't listen to the song anymore now that I know what it's about, it's that tweaked. His shit runs deep, it runs real deep.

Brendan: It does help the band to be a little more applicable to the masses than, say a band like Earth Crisis who has a set agenda and if people don't fit into it then they're pretty much shunned from that scene. But at the same time you guys haven't lost any intensity or emotion in the songs at all. . .

Keith: No, I really think that with this band is focused. Rorschach and Deadguy both had short attention spans, like two minutes and we're done, let's throw as much shit at people - a complete barrage - then it's over. With this, now we've got parts that last over two minutes long. Sometimes we call Tim "our Rollins" because like that song Sick Day, it's fucking eight minutes long, and Tim just goes through the whole thing and runs the gambit of emotion - from where it seems like he's about to break down and cry to where you think a fist is gonna come out of the speaker. When we let things open up, Tim shines. He's eons better than what he was in Deadguy, and he was great there.

Cori: Describe the average song writing process for you guys, does one of you come with a part and you all build from there? Or does one of you tend to have a structure down?

Keith: Well, usually me and Andrew will get a song close to a whole, [Tim cruises up and sits down with us] play it for Tom twice, Tom will come up with the bass line, and Tim just sits and listens to it at practice and writes at practice.

Cori: [To Tim] You actually write the lyrics at practice?

Tim: Yeah, I come up with an idea - I've found that if I try to write something without a song in front of me it comes out all humpy dumpty, da da-

da da-da da-da, rhyme and rhyme and rhyme and this is very boring. If I go off over the music it just falls out of my head, it's more organic and less cliché, and it's much more about the actual subject. It works pretty well, I'm one of the few singers that actually goes to practice. *[a few eyes and fingers raise in the direction of Brendan]*

Brendan: What are you pointing at fucker? Yeah, okay, Absinthe did the same thing. I can vouch for the organic nature of a practice that falls in line like that though, it's much better, especially from a vocal standpoint.

Tim: It works for me. That way I don't have this phrase that I'm in love with that's eight syllables too long and shit.

Cori: Right.

Brendan: *[to Tim]* We were talking all kinds of shit about you when you weren't here.

Keith: I told him how you came out of the closet and that's what Sick Day is about.

Tim: If someone yells "Fuck you!" on stage we all say *[Tim and Keith together]* "We want to suck your cock!"

Keith: Then they just shut right up.

Tim: We've discovered that's the perfect response to "Fuck you."

Brendan: Right on.

Cori: So why didn't you play any demo songs tonight?

Keith: We didn't play any demo songs?

Cori: Not a one.

Keith: Usually we play Hartley and Manthing.

Tim: That's a fauxpau on our part, I didn't realize that.

Cori: Ya see, that's when the pit would have exploded, kickboxing, madness. . .

[someone asks them what they think of dancers]

Tim: I like dancers, they turn me on.

Keith: Especially when they lapdance us while we play.

Tim: The higher they kick, the bigger my dick gets. . . Actually I like it, the old fashioned uncoordinated slamming into each other, no style points.

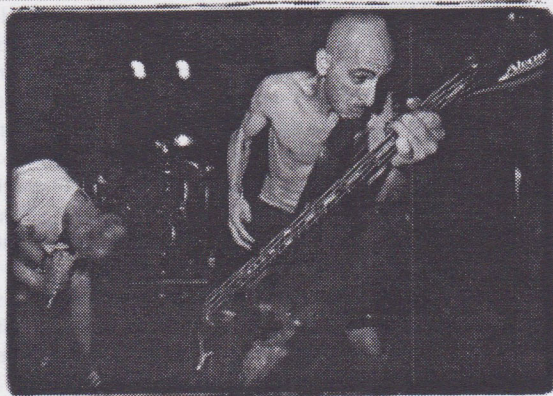
Keith: Not out to hurt anybody.

Tim: However anybody wants to freak out to the music is cool with me, but when they look like they've been programmed, that's when I question it.

Cori: When you know they've been practicing in front of the mirror all day.

Tim: I just like to see people going nuts.

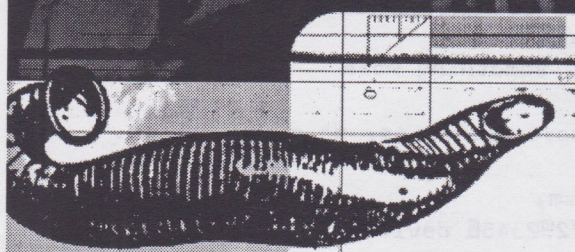
Keith: We want people to get out of it what we get out of it. We want people to come away a little shaken and feeling sad. . . H



converge
by jason hellman



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matchstick.

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terrorizer and rectifier

p l a n s the second (2nd) coming

and philosophises on sulfer and heroin
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it's a defense mechan ism,

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—day of suffering

—groundwork

—assuck



all photos by mike genz

—rorshach



A CERTAIN DEGREE OF FREEDOM

BY GREG BENNICK AKA: SUMA CHING HAI

The following article presupposes that you are living under capitalism (and I use the word 'under' quite specifically). It presupposes that the conditions under which most of the citizens of this country live their lives...as "workers" striving to reach capitalist-inspired goals rather than as living breathing passionate people, are still in place. It presupposes that there is a certain level of dissatisfaction in you and in those around you about the degree of personal freedom present in your life. I am writing on the 21st day of January 1998. If things change, drastically, between the time I write this article and when you begin to read it then please disregard the entire thing. That is, of course, unless that 'change' is a turn for the worse, a decline, a descent even further into personal and cultural despair. In that case, read on.

Something has gone terribly wrong in each of our lives. Somewhere along the line, from the time we are born and playfully enter childhood until we become "adults", we lose the will to live. It is a domino effect which has as its impetus the first time we are dishonest with ourselves about what we think and feel. We begin to move away from what we really want after that point and eventually reach a state of frenzy or total panic, a state in which we suddenly realize just how far from individual truth we have strayed. This inspires a paradigm shift - a total change in focus - as we reconstruct our lives. Reconstruction is what we need today in terms of the way we look at the modern workplace. When I hear my friends complain about work, I think the same fundamental thoughts: what inspires us to work until we achieve our material goals? For what reason are we so willing to forgo individual liberty and freedom - forgetting what is really important or inspiring to you - in order to work until we have passed through our youth? Do we work out of need or out of habit? Do we work *as much as we do* out of need or out of habit? I refuse to take a part in that sacrifice overall, and I am constantly working to reduce its impact on my life. I hope you will too.

Our lives are motivated by survival. I hold this as an objective truth. No rationally thinking or passionately feeling individual aspires towards death as a goal in day to day life. Yet, even with this rare objective platform upon which to stand, there is a great degree of variance from person to person. Some of us feel the need to live with greater degrees of luxury than others. What is really necessary to make it through life? Occasional food and occasional water, limited shelter and possibly some form of clothing. Companionship or discourse? Maybe. Above and beyond those basics, we can begin to separate wants and needs as two completely different entities. I suggest that it is a misguided sense of wants versus needs which damns many of us to thinking that we need to spend our lives for the sake of those other than ourselves. Granted, there are those for whom a job might be the greatest thing that ever happened to them...there are those so far in debt that they need to pay off their debts because they do not wish to suffer the consequences of non-payment...I can only wish that I had all of the answers for everyone. The best I can do is share my thoughts and feelings on the successes and failures of my own ridiculous life in hopes that others might find something workable for themselves in here somewhere. Ultimately, each of us can try. We can make steps forwards towards reaching a level of personal satisfaction in our lives. If you are not satisfied, work to become satisfied, using creativity, risk taking and every tool you can find. Create new tools when the old ones are not useful to you. Fight for your own life as no one else will.

It is a Thursday morning at about 10:30 - a weekday - and I am sitting down to write. It is a weekday...I am not at work. Why? Because I don't have a job, or at least, not a standard one as far as the rest of society is concerned. I have people ask me all the time what I do for a living, and when I tell them, their answer is the same: "You're a what?" I am a juggler. Yes, that's what I am. A juggler. I throw stuff up in the air and then catch it again and people give me money for it. I learned to juggle in 1983 in a junior high school after school course. In order to transform it from hobby to job, I just

started telling people that I could perform at birthday parties and things like that. I didn't know if I actually could perform at those events, but instead, I just wanted people to ask me to. Is that lying? I guess a little, but I had enough confidence that I was able to follow through on my promises. Today I do all different kinds of shows (and very few birthday parties!) Confidence: a key word. We aren't supposed to have it in these times. We are supposed to look towards our coworkers, our bosses, our politicians, our spouses or our concept of the divine for support and for salvation. This effectively distances us from our own lives and from our own view of reality. You are the only one you need to answer to. Don't let anyone tell you different. In fact, don't let me tell you either. Decide for yourself whether I am right or wrong or if this column is even worth reading. Question everything.

While I do not by any means recommend that you quit your job today and start throwing machetes and torches around the room, I do suggest that you sit down and start asking yourself whether or not you are currently satisfied with the way your life is going and if you even feel alive from day to day. To have and maintain personal freedom within a culture of prisoners...freedom not in comparison to me Greg Bennick, but freedom of, by, and for oneself...is a goal, in my opinion, worth working towards. I am free today during the standardized workday to do whatever I feel like doing because I made the choice to be free and I held myself to that decision. At the point when I moved to Seattle a few years back, I made a definitive choice about juggling. I had just gotten out of college and faced tens of thousands of dollars in debt. I had a fine arts degree in "theater" from a local college which might have been in "frisbee throwing" for the effect it promised on my financial future. I had a choice to make as the bills started coming in: would I get a standard job, or would I try to approach juggling as a full time career for the first time? Up until then I had been able to exist part time with it and get by, supplementing my income with work-study, etc. I thought about my friends who were graduating college and then immediately falling in line to apply for jobs which would consume and transform their lives completely. I made a choice: thinking about my future and my time, I decided to take the one talent I had created within myself (juggling) and to commit myself to it 100%. I remember sitting here with very little food in the refrigerator and no definitive plan of how to go about starting to make a living. I thought about what commitment really means: that you sometimes have no light at the end of the tunnel to guide you, that you move forward for your first step based entirely on faith - and that means faith in yourself! I identified that there would be no hand to hold, and no support network if I was to fail. I knew that I would be on my own. With the decision made, doors I never imagined existed began to open. There is so much to gain when you have nothing to lose. I know now that the decision to just try it and see what happens was the best move I have ever made. When the first month was up and I realized that I was actually going to be able to make rent, I was absolutely stunned. I started to think to myself that this could actually work! I hold as true to this day, that if I can make a living throwing stuff up into the air, that anyone can make a living doing *anything*. Since I believe that this life is our only life I see each of these moments as our only moments. To not utilize them to their utmost potential is criminal - this one life does not continue forever. It ends. We die. I think of all the people who never had a chance to do any of the things they wanted to do or see any of the things they wanted to see...was it worth it to them to spend their entire lives watching the clock hands slowly drift by? Was it worth the money they earned in exchange for the moments which made up their lives? Is it worth it to you?

It is very easy to translate our "wants" into a financial component. The new car costs \$X,000. The new stereo costs \$X00. The new CD costs \$8 (buy independent!). With this in mind, it is easy to see how we set goals based on what we want. I often think that I need things that I actually really only want. Advertisements and corporate psychology work constantly to convince me of what I want, and that I need those wants! With that in mind, I ask you to consider what the cost of a walk with a friend is? Or the cost of spending a day reading an incredible book or zine (or writing one for that matter!) What is the cost of feeling happy? These are things which we cannot place prices on, yet we are willing to forget them entirely, taking the easy way out and pursuing the "goals" which do have prices, simply because the system is set up for us to be able to attain those goals, which once achieved, will already have been replaced by new goals. Who replaces these goals? Who devotes their time to pursue these goals? Who allows their life to be altered and corrupted? You do.

You undoubtedly can identify fundamental differences between how you feel on days during which you have to work, and days which you have off. If you can not identify the differences between the two, consider yourself completely dead inside. For those who aspire to live passionately, our passions and pleasures supercede our culturally imposed wants. It is not easy for everyone. On the other hand, it is also not necessarily difficult for everyone either. "You will never know until you try": absolutely right. Perhaps it is not possible to create a situation which allows for your own

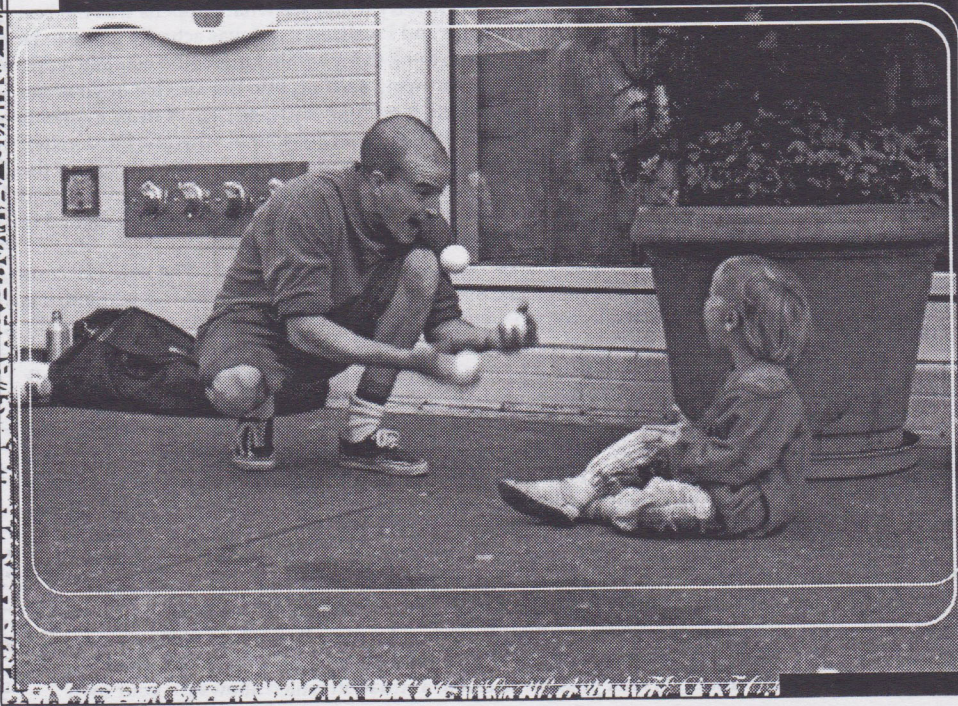
means of survival right away. Again, I can only wish that I had the answers for everyone. I have made compromises, and I continue to make compromises as I have definitely chosen a path which places me firmly in the hands of capitalism. I work for a living. I do not trade for a living in any bartering sense. My lifestyle and means of survival maintain the status quo from its very foundation point, and in supporting the system of capitalism, I support everything ugly that comes with it: the domination, the ruthlessness, the suffering of those less fortunate or less able to "succeed". Yet at the same time, I have placed myself in a position in which I can define my future and more importantly, my present as I desire. I can do what I want to do. I place the highest value on my free time, and so, in determining what I want and what I need, I work my income schedule around my free time schedule, not instead of it. . . Freedom is rarely explained and drawn out in such detail that it becomes an obvious choice. Personal autonomy is a political choice in our capitalist value oriented world - it is a threat to the established order. It does not mean a lunch break granted in the midst of employment. It does not mean a day off from a week of employment. It means the ability to leave oppression behind. It means the pursuit of your own desires, for your own sake, not for the sake of anyone else and not with the intent of oppressing anyone else.

I do not have economic stability for the future. I do not even know if I am going to have ANY income in the coming months ahead. That is the price I pay. I do not have many of the amenities or securities which come along with a regular standardized day job. For me, the price paid for those luxuries is far too high. What I do have is my perceptions, my thoughts, my feelings...I have my freedom today, to sit here and write to you, and that is of limitless value to me.

It means risk taking. It means struggling to gather up the courage to make and stay committed to the change. It means being scared and worried a lot of the time. But it means owning your own life just that much more, and that in itself, is priceless.

Keep in touch and tell me what you are thinking:

**Greg Bennick; 427 Eleventh Avenue East;
Seattle WA 98102; USA.**



STRAIGHTEDGE, HARDCORE, AND ME

CHECKIN' THE NYC "SCENE" -- BY CAROL WADE

I recently did a little checking outage of the NY Hardcore scene (bastion of much madness and revolution from way back when) after four years of exile in the bastardized and, unfortunately, once extremely cool home of a budding HC scene, Oswego, NY (home of the now muchly defunct DEAD IMAGE). June 23rd, the second day of summer here in the greaseball of stench we call The Big Apple (one I wouldn't even think of eating), I scurried down to the Wetlands (161 Hudson St., in the bowels of Downtown) to catch a meaty, manic Sunday Matinee: six bands, eight bucks, you cannot go wrong. I took down my reportage (which I have lovingly offered up to my

friend, Cori, for his excellent and amazing HEURISTIC FANZINE) between sets with a big, black permanent marker. I later discovered I had not, in fact, lost my favorite pen, but had left it at home, next to the stereo. Anyway, the commentary will now follow, with as little embellishment as possible, as it appears in my disintegrating sketchpad. Here's to Straightedge Hardcore and all its factions, and to those who are in there, trying to make the movement speak on so many deaf ears... (p.s. I wrote the commentary as if I was being interviewed, by myself, for my own non-existent 'zine... blame the fact that I don't have a job for that one...)



23 JUNE, 1996 Betcha never had someone interview themselves for your zine, eh? Can't do the bands too shy.

QUESTION #1: Why do I have these big, black X's on the backs of my hands?

A: For as long as I can remember, I've always deeply respected this scene, these people, this lifestyle. Even in the midst of a heavily poisoned period, I longed for the strength to 'pull my life up to the solidly crossed lines of absolute clarity. Sure, a few of these kids may not be the friendliest in the world, and a couple might seriously resent the fact that I, as a so-recently-enlightened, now wish to include myself so wholeheartedly into this somewhat exclusive throng. But mainly, I guess the X's are there. I have gotten over feeling uncertain and unsure about this all-consuming choice. I'm proud: of myself for making a commitment to my health and my future, of all these other young people for striving to achieve something that in today's sadly diseased and compromised age seems horribly difficult to many of their peers. A bunch of these kids might also harass me because of my grave lack of knowledge about the "scene" (or the music, moreso... the "scene" I think I know enough about to realize its positivity, rather than solely on the more seemingly violent and destructive aspects that are usually zoomed in on by idiots looking to diss). If, however, they do make it a point to question the validity of newcomers to the "scene", that may be one of its biggest drawbacks. It's not about purity of style and surface (how many limited edition cobalt blue vinyl INSIDE OUT 7"s you own, how baggy your pants are, or long your wallet chain is). To me, it's about purity of and intent: about the will to turn your back on old and useless ideals, to lose friends, to sacrifice more obvious pleasures for the strength to choose who you want to be, and how you can better change your life.

SO... Why do I have these big black X's on the backs of my hands? Because, for the first time since 11th grade (and after three-and-a-half years of nearly ruining my life), I am STRAIGHTEDGE: drug, alcohol and smoke-free, Vegan, celibate, and am FINALLY, in no way, seeking to destroy and abuse my body and waste my life.

Q #2: Whew! That's heavy stuff. Well... who've you seen so far?

A: Okay... I got here a little late, so I missed the first band. But the bouncy, yet relentless, Brooklyn

band, SHUTDOWN, just left the stage. Admirably, they all looked just shy of seventeen or eighteen (kind of embarrassing for an old salt of 21 like myself). These fellers finished with a triumphant flourish featuring Kevin from BOLD on lead vocals doing their old-skool classic, "Wise Up". They were squirrelly intense. They did it for the kids.

Q #3: Next. . . ?

A: Ascension from Cleveland, OH were next in the lineup. Their charmingly manic lead singer brandished a blood-curdling vocal style reminiscent of Karl from EARTH CRISIS, but went sadly-unheard through a lot of the set, due to frequent mic difficulties. The sound, however, was much more appetizingly tense and melodic than the previous speed-jockeys. Their humorous antics went to show just how much scenes differ around the place.

Q #4: And?

A: ENSIGN. Brutal, old-style shit from NJ (I think). A Sick of it All cover sets the stage for these uncompromisingly bombastic guys. The lead singer appealed heavily to the "good old days" (the late 80's NYC scene), and the band's style leaned towards those sweet, raw times. I nearly lost a liver in the down-and-dirty (yet, as always courteous and respectful) circle-pit, ad which the band seemed particularly fond of rousing. I would have bought the tape, but I think I mentioned being unemployed in the opening paragraph?

Q #5: There's more!?

A: Yep this was one loaded show. Long Island (my guilty-but-beloved home base) was in the house for the next featured performers, TRIPFACE, who gave more shout-outs than a guy in Turkish prison. These guys swung back to the more semi-melodic side, but didn't hesitate to voice their preference for speed, speed, SPEED. Since old-skool representing was definitely the order of the night, a JUDGE cover was served up scorching hot to a column of writhing bodies that threatened to scrape the lighting fixtures clear off the ceiling. A very positive and energetic group of individuals from a sometimes nauseatingly closed-minded place.

Q #6: And is there yet MORE!?

A: Alas, yes, we have reached the final event of the evening, which is indeed a poignant one. New Jersey's spirited MOUTHPIECE performed their last NYC gig of their six-year existence tonight. From here on, they will blaze out a few last NJ shows and then dissolve and regroup. Don't ask me why, though; obviously some of you all would have more of the lowdown on that situation than would I . . . their last hurrah has them clean, lean and really mean. . . but, of course, quite nice, all at once. The lead singer pays homage to the old-skool quite a bit (in keeping with the spirit of the evening, and no doubt inspired by the nostalgia and sadness of leaving the band behind). Here, too, BOLD was saluted, sending the crowd into a pulsating pyramid of flailing limbs. They also made some commentary on the oddly prevalent metal-edge that seems to be overtaking a lot of hardcore today (citing band logos with "flames and shit all dripping off them"), and proceeded to show the audience just what hardcore has always meant to them: swiftness, daring, a big fat fist in the face of those who dare to get in its way. The last few seconds of the show ended in a bittersweet anthem to the spirit of this movement that must live on: imagine a pile of bodies sky high, the lead singer of the band buried somewhere beneath, the guitar lost in a fizzle of noise, the bass and guitar plodding steadfastly into the song's final bars, a chorus of hair-raising screams pouring into the broken mike and into the mute night air. As the lead singer said at the start of their final set, the band may be no more, but they hope to leave behind what, hopefully, all of hardcore's "mouthpieces" (bands, fans, admirers and supporters alike) will leave behind. . . "more than words".

Q #7: Yikes. . . that's it, right?

A: Yeah that's about the size of it. STRIFE were supposed to play, but who knows? Something happened.

Q #8: Ah, well. . . that sucks, but you can't have everything for only eight bucks, can you? Well, what did you learn today?

A: I learned that hardcore's about the only useful thing a kid can get into nowadays. TV, no matter how good it gets, will always come dangerously close to having the chilling characteristics of a narcotic substance, which is also disturbingly shackled to mainstream ideas and propaganda. Even school, with the education system so screwed beyond belief, cannot function as a sole positive force

for the young mind of today. If kids like the little unfortunate fucking vagrants I sat amongst on the subway on the way home who bragged copiously about having been thrown into juvenile prison, hooted and hollered about "kissing and goin' with fat chicks", and retold tales about boosting an already stolen van) were given exposure to hardcore (or a like-minded, body-and-mind-clearing youth movement, are rare), they might actually be of some use in the future, rather than merely clogging an already stressed system. It is true, though, that the music and the "scene" are not for just everyone. Even I'm beginning to think I'm getting a little old to handle the decibel level (or maybe that's just because I left my real earplugs at home with my pen). But mosh pit violence is much more pro-active and controlled than even hip-hop lyrics are, and those are just conceptualized rantings about an already unfortunate reality.

What I learned is that a lot of things about hardcore are really great, but also not so great. I think that in order for things to keep forwards, the "preaching to the converted" attitude has got to go. Hopefully (and it seems more likely that this will come along with the anticipated evolution of our species), more kids will come around to a straightedge, if not only hardcore, lifestyle. I think that hardcore, sXe, and Veganism all have the potential to show a good section of the population how it is to live a self-controlled, non-violent and incredibly civilized life, straight from the swirling melee of a flurry of bodies who get together to survey their strength in the evening hours.

Thanks, think straight, and live in peace.

Carol Wade; 106 Pinehurst Ave. apt. C4;
New York, NY 10033

GUEST COLUMNIST

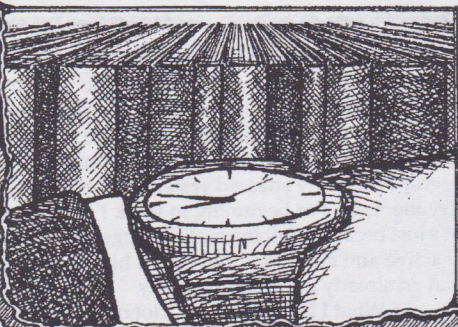
BRENDAN DESMET

It's sometimes very painful and defeating for me when I realize how futile changing my birthright of a tainted conscience seems now at age 25. The idea that the innocence of youth and almost unrecognizably minute amount of time spent in a state of purity of mind is long since buried beneath the rubble of impression and indoctrination is at once overwhelming and enraging. It's so fucking unfair that I never had a chance to decide for myself! And as the years become an ever-increasing factor in my thoughts, it's difficult to escape the notion that my failures at self determination are somehow predestined and eternal. . .

And try though I may, my efforts to defect from the ranks of the helpless and create anew seem heavily stained by the ink of histories already recorded. My ideas, ideals and ideologies are not truly my own. Are they? Well how can they be?! I've tried so hard to scrape away at the layers and layers of accumulated shit in an effort to reach some entombed, untouched level of conscience hoping I might then tap into it and find my own way, but alas, I scrape in vain. From our first tender moments on this earth the bombardment begins and our futures are irrevocably marked. None of us are born as the hateful, greedy and otherwise pathetically directionless creatures most humans end up being to one degree or another, but when we realize that we've become so spineless, so self-centered, in fact, so loathsome, I guess it's just too fucking late. Is it? Right now I'm trying desperately not only to find out, but to prove that it is not. I do not want to follow and fail, I want to find that bit of unturned soil and dig my fingers deep into it's rich, boundless possibilities and mold my own life worth living. Am I getting closer every day or is time an unmatchable foe? Tomorrow may hold the key. . .

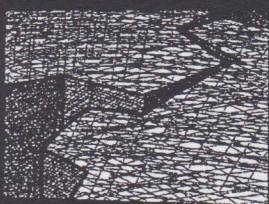
Brendan DeSmet; P.O.Box 856; Tucson,
AZ 85702

A FEW SERENE MOMENTS
AFTER OUR CONVERSATION
TRANSFORMED TO SILENCE



HE TURNED
AND COLDLY
ASKED ME
WHAT SIDE
I'D
BE ON.

PRIDE WOULD HAVE ME
ON THE WINNING SIDE.



SECURITY WOULD
HAVE ME ON THE
SIDE OF MY FRIENDS.

I FEIGNED A HESITATION, LOOKED AT HIM SEVERELY AND
EXPLAINED THAT I'D BE ON THE SIDE I BELIEVED IN.

WRETCHED FUCKING GAME

WHO WOULD BENEFIT FROM MY RESISTANCE.

WHAT RIGHT HAVE I TO BE CONCERNED.

CONCERN COULDN'T RESTORE THE FADED, NOR COULD
IT PROCURE THE VALIDITY OF THIS REVULSION

WITHOUT THE GUIDANCE OF FAITH'S GOLDEN FLAME
DESPAIR HAS CONSUMED MY DESOLATE SOUL.



I'VE TAKEN MY PLACE IN A NOWHERE
MACHINE AND I CAN
FEEL MY EXISTANCE
GRINDING AWAY
WITH EACH
IMPETUOUS
REVOLUTION.

SAVE YOUR BREATH.

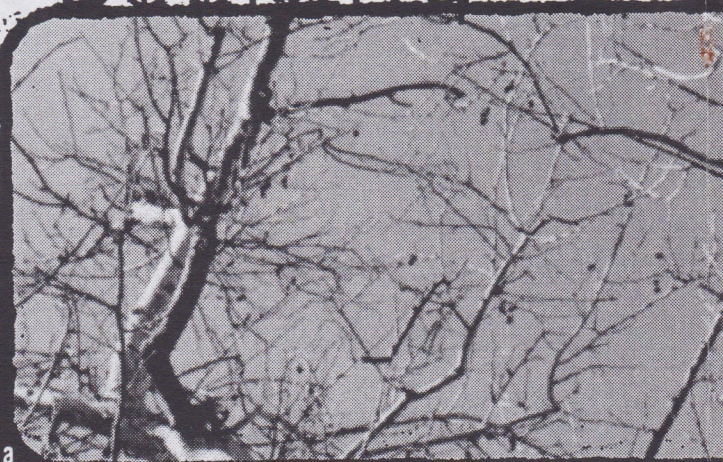
YOU'RE NOT THE BAS-
TARD THAT DESTROYED
MY WORLD. . .

APATHY IS.

DO IT YOUR- SELF BOOKING

101

So you live in Hicktown, IL and you've barely got a pathetic excuse for a hardcore scene? Or your hometown has a lot of potential but you're not sure what you can do to help? Or maybe you just want to help out a friend's band on their way through your area? Well if you've never set up a show before you're going to need a little help. Your best bet would be to start helping a friend who's already been booking shows, learn the ropes and then take it from there, but either way here's a quick run-down of the steps. . .



Step 1: The Bands

If this is your first show the best route to take is all local bands, that way no matter what happens, nobody's screwed. Pick a date and gather up some bands. Most people have varying theories on keeping line-ups strict to one style, or diversifying as much as possible. Keeping shows too linear caters to those with narrow planes of musical support, and encourages scene division (unifying that small group tightly, while inherently excluding others). Varying bands styles too drastically is sure to flop (each band will play for their friends who leave immediately afterwards to be replaced with the next band and their friends). Most kids won't stay through a bunch of bands they've never heard of. My theory is to find a balance somewhere in the middle, introducing groups of kids to new music without scaring them away, and giving them the opportunity to meet people they otherwise wouldn't. Keep in mind that these are just my thoughts, and nothing concrete, situations will vary greatly from scene to scene.

Once you've been doing shows for a while (and if you take care of your bands) your name will get sifted through the mighty colander of hardcore networking, via mail, telephone and internet, and things will happen in a different order. Bands will begin to call you and ask you to set up a show for them. Ask them if any other bands will be with them, when they'll be here, if they'll need a place



to stay, and if you aren't already familiar with the band ask for a demo or record or something to give you a clue what they are like so you can best plan the line-up. Once you've got all the info, step 2 begins. . .

Step 2: The Venue

Now that you know what you're dealing with, start looking for a place to throw your little shin-dig. Depending on your area this could be the most difficult step. Think about what kind of band you're working with, what the turn out will be, what kind of kids will most likely come, etc. and plan your venue accordingly. If you're lucky your area has a kid-run show space and if so that's usually your best avenue. If not, you can call some local clubs (stick to safe and trustworthy environments), Boys and Girls clubs, record stores, empty properties, be creative, you never know. Houses and basements are always great too, just make sure you chat with the neighbors first. See that your venue's size is appropriate according to your estimated turnout.

When you find a venue you've got to figure a few things out. Clubs usually will provide everything you need: door persons, sound equipment (mics, stands, PA), tables for merchandise, etc. Find out. If it's a house or record store you'll need to provide these things yourself. Clubs will cost more but let you off a few hooks, and houses are vice versa. Figure out your costs and weigh the consequences.

Step 3: The Setup

Now is when you put your organizational skills to the test. Decide what other bands you want to play (if any). Remember the bands purpose of touring is to get heard. If nobody knows who they are then nobody will come, so put them up with local bands of a somewhat similar style to draw kids to the show. Keep the

bands informed of your progress and call them back and let them know what you've come up with. Tell them what to expect as far as expected turnout, other bands playing, venue, etc. Be honest and don't let there be any surprises. Give them directions to the venue or to your house and discuss times of arrival. If they need a place to stay, do your best to find one.

Think the show through start to finish. If everything's in order then it's time to make the flyers. Make sure that the flyers have the entire list of bands playing, time, date, location, directions, and cost. If you can put a number for information on the flyer that's not a bad idea (your choice). Make them as clear and easy to understand as possible. Get those little hookers out at least a month (hopefully more) before the scheduled date. Start with record stores, skate shops, coffee houses, anywhere kids hang out. Don't be exclusive about the places you flyer. Try to get as many kids there as possible. Keep your ear to the ground for other events that you can pass out flyers at, especially other shows. This is probably the most important step. Don't slack on promotion!

Step 4: The Show

Okay, so the day of the show has arrived, you can feel it in the air, kids are anxious and your stomach's swarming with wild butterflies. Calm down, if you've followed these steps everything will be fine. If your schedule allows it, try to meet with the bands early, show them around your town. Getting to know other kids and making new friends is undoubtedly the most important benefit of putting on shows, so don't miss out. Bring the bands to (or meet at) the venue an hour or so early to get everything situated. The amount of prepa

ration will vary greatly depending on your environment. Do your best to get the show rolling at a reasonable time. Hell, you could even start it when the flyer says to (now there's an outrageous idea). Unless you're on Orange County time, try to start it within a half an hour from the flyer time. You want to wait for the majority of the kids to collect, but you don't want to force your punctual scenesters to wait around too long. Once you've got the show started, it's (hopefully) the time when you can relax and witness the benefits of all your hard work.

Step 4: The Aftermath

Now it's time to take care of business. Hopefully, hopefully, hopefully, (cross your fingers) all went well, a decent amount of kids supported you endeavor and there's some money to be shared. First take care of things with the venue, pay them what you agreed on. Next, try to reimburse yourself for flyers, mailing lists, and long distance.

Then divide what's left between the bands that played. Be 100% open and honest about the number of kids that showed up, how much was made, and where it's all going. Try to pay you local bands something, they deserve some financial support. If money is really tight (which it often will be) you'll need to decide how to adjust payment. I, being the weak and kind-hearted individual that I am, usually end up scraping out my own pockets at the end of each show to give the touring bands as much as humanly possible (and of course eating all my expenses) but as the volume of shows you do increases you'll find you can't afford to continue taking dents like that, so do what you feel is right, and everything should be just fine.

Well kids, now that you've been schooled on the very fine art of setting up shows it's time to test the waters. Like I said, put together a local show first, you'll learn a lot and be grateful for the extra experience when it comes time for a touring show. I hope those of you that took the time to read this now realize the time and effort that goes into putting on a show and think twice before passing up next Tuesday's show so you and your crew can go bowling. Touring bands need your support, whether you think you'll like them or not, go find out, eh? H

DON'TS TO REMEMBER:

***Don't do shows you don't want to.**

Simple as that, If you don't have that personal drive to see the show though then do the band a favor and pass it along to a friend (supplying the band with a few phone numbers is an extremely kind and helpful gesture).

***Don't let your bands wonder what's going on.**

Make it a point to inform the bands at least every week or so of your progress, and be up-front about your plans.

***Don't let setting up shows drain your wallet**

due to long-distance phone calls or the cost of printing flyers. I know it seems screwed up when you consider a cut for yourself, but it's not about making money, it's about being able to afford the necessary steps. Think of it as an expense along with the renting the venue, PA, and paying for flyers or mailing lists. A good idea would be to start a little fund, scrape off a small amount from each show you do to use for flyers, phone bills, even a back-up for bad shows (it's bound to happen). That way you've got a little something to give to the band even if no one shows up. Don't let setting up shows bleed you dry, it shouldn't be necessary.

***Don't guarantee anyone more than you can afford to lose**

- a quote from the mighty Rust fanzine's column on setting up shows. Whether you work with guarantees or not is your choice, but my recommendation is to stay far away from anything of that nature. Let the bands know that you'll do your best and they'll get their fair share of what is made. If that won't do, then give them the number of your local rock promoter and forget it. . .

TRIAL



SESAMOID BONES
1. METACARPAL



BIRTHRIGHT

A wise man once said, "Talking about music is like dancing about architecture." The

bottom line is you just have to hear it. No words can ever fully explain the complexity of

completely grasp the emotions expressed through the phenomenon we call music. It's

something one feels in the bottom of their souls, and transcends the limits of speech. The

following lists of thoughts are simply opinions, nothing more, nothing less. Take them for

what they're worth, and then find out for yourself. . .

REVIEWERS

REVIEWERS:

EMMETT WHITE

CORIAN TON HALE

SLACKERS AND SABATUERS:

JASON STINSON

JAYARE ROBBINS

TIM MATTHEWS

Record Reviews

ABSINTHE 7" Oh shit. What to say. This is so fucking incredible. I was surprised at first by that plain appearance of the outside cover but it betrays the true genius inside. The booklet is one of those Christian Chick tract things with Absinthe lyrics as opposed to the word of God. Brilliant in itself, and we haven't even got into the music yet. I listened to the first side 15 times before turning it over. I was amazed, enraged, inspired and generally knocked on my ass. Little did I know that side B would prove to be just as intense, but in a completely different way. If variety is the spice of life, this belongs in a Thai restaurant. The Absinthe sound has actually gotten better, a feat which I thought impossible. Now they are more raw, heavy, and artistic without ever slipping into metal. The lyrics are ugly but not in a cliché way. That's the thing about Absinthe, they take everything I love about hardcore and wrap it up in an awesome package leaving out all the unnecessary bullshit and posturing. This one gets my vote for the best of '97. (King of the Monsters/8341 E. San Salvador/Scottsdale, AZ 85258) EW

ANGELS IN THE ARCHITECTURE - One Ten CD This emotive four piece from Buffalo cites influences such as The Promise Ring, Christie Front Drive, Mineral, Sunny Day Real Estate, and Quicksand. That should give you a good enough idea of what to expect, the one factor that sets them apart however is the vocals which have a unique and interesting hoarseness to them. Unpretentious is my best description of this project. (One Percent Records/P.O.Box 141048/Minneapolis, MN 55414-1048) CH

BANE - Free to Think, Free to Be 7" Unfortunately I'm not able to join the newly formed parade of Bane fanatics. I am quite fond of the resurgence of old school hardcore, I do however feel that few bands are doing it well (see Ten Yard Fight review) and with the fury it once held. Now a video I saw of these kids in action

told quite a different story, and I'd be very interested in seeing Bane live however it's this particular 7" that I'm reviewing, so I'll just say that it isn't bad, it just drags, the lyrics are standard and I'm not at all moved by it. I guess that means it's bad, huh? Oh well. (Life/214 A Mountain Street East #14/Worcester, MA 01606) CH

BOTCH - The Unifying Themes of Sex, Death, and Religion CD All prereleased tracks, the Faction 7", The John Birch Conspiracy Theory 7", and the song Closure from the Can't Live Without It compilation all wrapped up in an extremely smooth cardboard case for your listening pleasure. If you've never witnessed the power of Botch then this is your beast, if you've already got the vinyl then it's still worth picking up for convenience's sake. (Excursion/P.O.Box 20224/Seattle, WA 98102) CH

BOYS LIFE - Departures and Landfalls LP/CD What can be said that hasn't already found it's way to your uncompromising ears. This record is simply incredible, inside and out. What kills me is the fact that if a friend hadn't bought this for me I might still be living in the darkness of a world without the knowledge of Boys Life's casual brilliance. If you haven't heard this please do yourself a favor and pick it up. You've got the Hueristic seal of approval here, you can't go wrong. (Cargo Music, Inc./4901-906 Morena Blvd./San Diego, CA 92117-3432) CH

BRIDGEWATER demo I am pleased to see an increasing trend in the quality of demo tapes these days. This is no exception, it's recorded well, packaged nicely in a computer designed sleeve with photos and lyrics. The songs structures are well written, and comes off strong and solid sounding. The songwriting style lends itself to a mix between Harvest and Falling Forward or Sawhorse, with a wide range of moods being addressed. There's even some Overcast-ish

metal stuff in here. My only criticism is that I don't care for this particular singing style (which is simply a personal preference). Don't hesitate to snatch this one up.



Botch - by robby redcheeks

(Bridgewater/3 Edgeclift Rd./Baltimore, MD 21286) CH

CHALKLINE/FIGUREHEAD split 7" Chalkline has a solid sound, nothing new or ground-breaking, but I like them. A little chug, a little noise, and a little metal to smooth it out. My only beef is the second song has a singing part that I really dislike, to the point of my needing to stop the record when it arrives. The Figurehead side is that sing-songy punk sound that we all hate, which leaves me with three questions: #1: Is this a real band? #2: Do they actually give a crap about what they do? #3: What's their excuse for the pathetic excuse for an insert/lyric sheet? I also think that both sides would have been better off without the samples. Buy this for the Chalkline songs and keep Figurehead's side DOWN. (Shandle/7959 Mentor Ave. #G8/Mentor, OH 44060) CH

CHALKINE - Parade 7" My annoying adherence to an idea called honesty binds me to admit that I'm not too fond of this record. It's feels uncomfortable at times, not very smooth at all.

I expected something better after the split. This isn't bad, it's just that it's not something that I would want to listen to again, which isn't a good thing. Maybe I'm just in a pessimistic mood right now. There is however a small writing by Matt on the insert about hardcore scene politics that makes the three bucks well spent. Well said. (Toothless/P.O.Box 6731/Louisville, KY 40206-0731) CH

CLIKITAT IKATOWI - Live August 29 & 30, 1995 LP Clikitat Ikatowi were part of the most musically and structurally innovative movements in the past few years, and in most opinions they were at the front of it, that being the chaos-core scene of a few years back. Their sound was one of pure energy coupled with a whirling creativity blasting off into uncharted realms of the musical and emotional universe; all too much really. The words behind the music are of an inspirational manner both to social activists and normal struggling people alike. Seeing as how this is all recorded live, I can imagine it won't be as appealing to virgins of the Clikitat, but they are one of my favorite bands, and I enjoy it immensely. If someone I know was inclined to explore this band, I would recom-

the rape of the natural world, industrial apocalypse, and the exploitation of innocent life? Oh wait, it's North Carolina's Falling Down with a new line-up, a new name, and a completely different sound. You've heard the word 'brutal' before but you haven't actually felt it until you've heard Day of Suffering. Try fusing the liberationist ethics of Earth Crisis or Raid with the lyrical prowess and vivid imagery of Starkweather on top of the musical torment of the most brutal death metal bands in existence and behold the ultimate in musical resistance. "Instead of a pawn you've created a prophet, and I prophesize the destruction of your world. . ." (Catalyst/6142A N. Compton/Indianapolis, IN 46220) CH

DEPRESSOR demo Does anybody remember the

for Depressor. Slow/mid-tempo death metal influenced stuff, nothing too impressive, but not horrible considering it was recorded in 1995. Song titles will tell you something: F.I.L.T.H., Victimizer, Human Scum, Chunks, etc. Not my cup of tea. (Depressor/P.O.Box 472007/San Francisco, CA 94147-2007) CH

DIGRESSION - Controlled 7" The Lake Effect hardcore scene has spawned some great bands, but I'm afraid this isn't one of them. With the overabundance of metal influenced hardcore these days Digression doesn't strike me as possessing the attributes necessary to rise above the multitudes and receive recognition or stature. Song topics range from animal liberation oriented topics to being "stabbed in the back" by "sellouts". This record isn't bad, it just isn't good. (SA MOB/P.O.Box 1931/Erie, PA 16507-0931)

DISCIPLE - Scarab 7" Ladies and gentlemen, EMS has done it this time. You'd better strap yourself into a straight-jacket before tossing this one on, because the furious onslaught of metal will have you repeatedly crushing your face in on the closest stable object you can find. Pile on the thickest crunchiest guitar sound, some death metal twists, stomp breaks that threaten to rip your guts clean out of your asshole, vocals like Dan's been devouring shards of glass, and if you're still conscious call the fire department because Disciple just burned your house down. (SA MOB/P.O.Box 1931/Erie, PA 16507-0931)

DRAGBODY 7" Packaging on this sucker is simple, yet innovative, and works well, except for the rocker pictures of each member's instrument being played. Vocals are way Groundwork, and the drums tend to mosh. Guitars are metal minus the chugga-chugga which is refreshing. Wait, there is a chugga-chugga part, but it sounds more death metal than sXe. Wait, fuck! They made a liar out of me again! More chugga, but it's mixed up with other elements so it's not boring. Lyrics are depressing phrases patched together. This shit is so overdone, but Dragbody pulls it off better than most. (Mike/P.O.Box 4382/Winter Park, FL 32793-4382) EW

DRAINED - No One In Control CD The bad photos and generic layouts had me convinced that this was a waste of plastic, but this turned out to be some decent New York style hardcore, solid and tough. Not terribly original, but if you like Sick of it All or 25 ta' Life then check this out. (Section 8/P.O.Box 6111/Plymouth, MA 02362) CH

DRIFT/JONAH split 7" The packaging of this little



Sick Of It All - by hobby canada

mend them first to their LP "Orchestrated and Conducted by. . ." and then to this one. Oi. (Gravity/P.O.Box 81332/San Diego, CA 92138) EW

DAY OF SUFFERING - The Eternal Jihad CD Holy shit! When did Cannibal Corpse take on issues such as

movie "Beastmaster"? Well the end has this black leathery horned monster that used to scare the shit out of me as a kid. What's that demonic reprobate been up to since his acting career took a dive? Apparently singing

saucer is far above average, it's got a definite Great American Steak Religion feel to it but it doesn't say who did the layout (although Yannick is thanked by both bands). My first point of concern (for both sides) is that the vocals are super low in the mix, which might have been a mistake in the mastering process, or just a bad attempt at creativity. Either way the muffled sound makes this split difficult to appreciate. If either of these bands have anything special going on we'll have to wait for another release to find out. (Anima/1416 Ambercraft Lane/Oakville (ON)/L6M 1Z7) CH

EARTH CRISIS - *Gomorrah's Season Ends* LP/CD Am I the only person who likes this record? Most of the kids I know either don't own it or they never listen to it. **GIVE IT A CHANCE.** I do believe it isn't as good as their other records, but it still stands up to there earlier efforts we all know and love. Lyric-wise they have toned down their militancy which I don't like, but their is still a lot to take in. Earth Crisis fans - put this back on you record player and learn more than "I am Straight Edge." Soon you won't be able to turn it off. (Victory/P.O.Box 146546/Chicago, IL 60614) JS

EMBODYMENT demo Pick up a thesaurus and look up the word unbelievable. You still won't have enough words to describe this band. This is without a doubt the best thing I have heard all year. Trust me it's not for the weak at heart, Only fans of grindcore and sick heavy death metal will truly find the greatness in this. Clean the heads on your tape player and stand back because this one will kick your butt. Awesome recording and vocals will have you starting your own record label to put this one out. **ORDER IT NOW OR YOU SUCK!!!** (Embodiment/P.O.Box 99601-306/Arlington, TX 76096-9601) JS

ENEWETAK/UNRUH split 7" This is a record I've been anticipating for

some time now, with Enewetak being the focus of that excitement, but as it turns out Unruh's side is the one that caught my attention. Unruh's tunes (which could have benefited greatly from a better recording sound) come out rugged and rough with ugly downtuned guitars and that guttural heaving torturous sound that you've all grown to love. Enewetak's side is good too, don't get me wrong, but after such brilliance as "And the Beat Goes On. . ." it's easy to feel let down. (Feast and Famine/P.O.Box 10221/Scottsdale, AZ 85271) CH

FALL SILENT - *Nineteen Hundred Ninety-Seven 7"/CS/MCD* It seems that more and more bands these days fall into that mediocre "they'll grow on you" category. Fall Silent took a bulldozer and fiendishly brutalized that concept into oblivion. These two songs are ferocious, intelligent, and absolutely relentless. If this doesn't have you kickboxing in your bedroom on the first spin then nothing will. (Moo Cow/P.O.Box 616/Madison, WI 53701) CH

FASTBREAK - *Don't Stop Trying 7"* Five songs packed with fast riffs, bass solos, back up vocals in all the right places, and plenty of GO's. '88 style posi-core that has me pointin' and screaming along, rekindling that youth crew flame that was blown out by a recent E-chord invasion. Reminds me of Wide Awake - nothing wrong with that. Nice layout with lyrics and a great insert poster. If the sounds of the past are your thing then you need to pick this up. (Third Party/21 Nancy Lane/Amherst, NY 14228) TM

FOCAL POINT - *Suffering of the Masses* LP/CD The cover features bald men burning in hell. How come the covers of all these sXe macho hardcore albums the people are always men in some expression of suffering, and always bald? Weird. On to the music. Very Earth Crisis inspired, with some unbroken thrown in here and there. Cori tells me the vocals sound just like Eyelid, and I'm going to have to trust him because he knows more about this stuff than I do. At least Focal Point is up front about it's goals in the hardcore scene (unlike some other bands). "Your like is made up of contradiction and ignorance/If you were more educated you wouldn't have turned out like this/So I'm here to show you the right way." They probably wont get too many converts this way. I've

been waiting for a Christian band to say it and Focal Point finally did: "You are wrong and I am right." (Tooth and Nail/P.O.Box 12698/Seattle, WA 98111-4698) EW

FOLD ZANDURA - *Return* CD Mellow, polished, radio-focused alternative. Songs are written in a standard verse/chorus/bridge structure, lyrics seem slightly uncreative, but then again you have to consider my basis for comparison. If alternative was my thing, I would probably think this was pretty decent. If you like studio effects, keyboards, and harmonies that will put you to sleep then this is right up your alley - just beware of the hidden track, it's bad news. (Sublime/9000 Sunset Blvd. Suite 300/West Hollywood, CA 90069) CH

FOUR HUNDRED YEARS LP Needless to say the packaging is amazing, as with every Steak Religion release. I haven't seen them since they left Arizona so I wasn't sure what to expect. This turned out to be more than I could ask for. Musically Four Hundred Years are way ahead of their time. I can see many band trying to emulate them in the future. Lyrics are surprisingly relevant, I don't know what to call it, socio-personal-political? Very inspiring. I love everything about this record, except for the fact that it's 45 rpm instead of 33rpm. Flowing into the stream of consciousness, connected to the pools of yesterday, hitting with right-on relevancy today, working towards dreams of tomorrow. This is the kind of record that keeps me alive. (The Great American Steak Religion/5 Arlington Way/Ottawa, Ontario/Canada K2P 1E1) EW

GAT-ROT demo Stompy rap/hardcore with lyrics addressing various social and political is



sues such as corruption, violence, and bringing down the system. "The Man" does not endorse this product, due to the fact that it will lead to his eventual demise. It's now a matter of listening to what these kids have to say and doing something about it. If you can hang with bands like Downset or Biohazard then give it up for Gat-Rot y'all. (Gat-Rot c/o Charlie/6371 S. Neblina PL./Tucson, AZ 85746) CH

HANDS TIED CD/7" All I really should say is Mouthpiece, seriously though, this is a great example of pure straight edge hardcore. Musically too similar to even notice a difference between the two bands. If mouthpiece was your thing than this is sure to hit the spot - also the CD version of this 7" has two extra tracks. (Equal Vision/P.O.Box 14/Hudson, NY 12543) TM

HONEY - Lovely CD Blah!! Alternacrap! This is my own personal and uncultured opinion - I don't like it. The lyrics make no sense to me and the slow basic music is drown out by the whiney vocals and lame words. It's just not my style. I don't really like a lot of alternative, but if you do it might be good, I wouldn't know good music if it kicked me in the nuts! So don't take my word for it, check it yourself. (Sublime/9000 Sunset Blvd. Suite 300/West Hollywood, CA 90069) JR

IDA/DEADWOOD DIVINE split 7" First I must compliment the creative force behind the Tree saga. This is the first of the nine 7" series dedicated to long distance lovers, and apparently to creativity and quality as well because this is just amazing. There is so much heart in this release I would like to congratulate Tree Records for overstepping the bounds of music production into the realm of real life experience and feelings. The two songs here compliment the packaging and round out the entire feeling with some beautiful music. Do yourself a favor and find this record - It's good for the soul. (Tree/P.O.Box 31840/Philadelphia, PA 19104) CH

IRONY OF LIGHTFOOT 7" I'm not quite sure how to describe this record. The Lightfoot's sound wanders in a few different directions, but not quite close enough to any one sound that you can make a distinct comparison or settle on one opinion. It's got the rock, and the roll, and the sass, but a little bit of softness, almost like a hot night in Las Vegas with Timm MacIntosh. Imagine Introspect and Rye Coalition tangled up in a spider's web and The Van Pelt licking their lips and preparing to eat them. It's interesting. Not your standard

Wreck-Age material. (Wreck-Age/P.O.Box 263/New York, NY 10012) CH

JEREMIN 7" It seemed as though this recording would never happen, but it finally has. After seeing this band play for the last year you can imagine the twitch my hand made as my finger pressed the play button. Are those angels singing? Amazing! This record is a must have. Along with great packaging and songwriting the poetic vocals and back up vocals make it all go by way too fast. This make me proud to be from Arizona! Maybe this record will keep the rest of the kids from moving away. The only thing more I could ask for is the heavy guitars this band once had. That's my only complaint. Two thumbs up, four stars and what not for this one. (King of the Monsters/8341 E. San Salvador/Scottsdale, AZ 85258) JS

JESUIT 7" Wooh! I found it! I thought I had lost it and Cori would have been pissed since there are only 200 of these in existence, and the package is so damn fancy. This is almost sludgy at times, and I know all the kids into pounding, discordant heaviness will love this sickness. Too bad the recording sucks, I might like it a lot more. (Reservoir/P.O.Box 790366/Middle Village, NY 11379-0366) EW

JIHAD - New Testament 7" Back from the dead, it's Jihad, intact with their patented craziness. Some Acme and Unbroken shine through their black steel exterior. Lyrics are personal and in your face as ever, feeling as if the singer is digging his finger into your heart. Packaging looks real

nice. My only fear is that Jihad may be taking themselves too seriously, their humor is what set them apart in the first place. (Makoto/P.O.Box 50403/Kalamazoo, MI 49005) EW

KILLSADIE CD Noisy discordant hardcore with a strong melodic quality. It's fast and strummy with screaming vocals, similar to Fingerprint or Jasmine. This CD includes the four songs from the 7" plus two, and 7 live songs on top of that. This is the best project to date by One Percent. (One Percent Records/P.O.Box 141048/Minneapolis, MN 55414-1048) CH

KISS IT GOODBYE - She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not LP/CD Holy crap! This freakin' rules. It's heavier than a rock and more evil than Anton Lavay. The perfect soundtrack for moshing your friend into a wall while you light their face on fire and put it out with an ice pick. This is worth every penny. (Revelation/P.O.Box 5232/Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232) JR

KOSMOS EXPRESS - Now CD Well, I think I've got a pretty open mind towards musical genres other than my favorites, so don't think it's a matter of taste when I tell you this is just plain bad. Mostly alternative with some modern/progressive rock fused in there, sung vocals, other nonsense. The fact is, no matter how much time and money you pour into a recording studio, bad music is still bad music. Sorry. (Sublime/9000 Sunset Blvd. Suite 300/West Hollywood, CA 90069) CH

LANYARD - Realms 7" I think someone once said, "If there's one instrument that should never be brought into hardcore it's a saxophone." Well, that's okay because Lanyard is far from a hardcore band, more like John Zorn after a Lobotomy. It's like grocery store sax jazz with bizarre and unorthodox twists of rock and pop. It's mellow and artsy and to be quite frank I hate it, but then saxophones and I have never gotten along. Regardless people should hear this and be inspired to push the traditional set up of drums/bass/guitar/vox and try something new. Massive props for the

effort. (One Percent Records/ P.O.Box 141048/Minneapolis, MN 55414-1048) CH

LIVING SACRIFICE - *Reborn* CD Believe it or not... They're back! What most people don't know is that this is their fourth full length album. With the first record coming out almost 7 years ago this band has done their time in the metal world we all love. This is their most hardcore record, they've hung up their blast beats and guitar solos for something a little more angry. This reminds me of a good mix between Sepultura and Meshugga. Very heavy and ideal for those of you who like the mix of metal and hardcore. (Tooth and Nail/P.O.Box 12698/Seattle, WA 98111) JS

NINEIRONSPIRITFIRE - *Seventh Soul Sacrificed* CD/7" Seattle's Nineironspiritfire has done it again. This new release is absolutely insane. Seven songs on the CD, and four on the 7", far more experimental and noise oriented than the demo, and much more original. The CD has a lengthy noise section sealed off by the demo songs for a total of forty-three and a half minutes of agony, despair, and absolute hatred transformed into layers upon layers of vocal work, samples and brutally creative song structures. All of that on top of one of the sickest layouts ever makes this one of my favorites for 1997. (Indecision/ P.O.Box 5781/Huntington Beach, CA 92615) CH

ONE KING DOWN - *Bloodlust Revenge* CD/LP It's always funny to see titles like "Bloodlust Revenge" and "More Hate Than Fear" on a Krishna label such as Equal Vision. The cover looks kinda cheesy which is too bad because it had to be expensive. Every song is about sXe and the connected topics of betrayal, loyalty, etc. except for one song about veganism. Musically reminiscent of early Earth Crisis. I might like it if I could take this sort of thing half seriously, but in view

of our world's state I think that being macho is one of the worst things to be, especially in the case of a sXe vegan. (Equal Vision/P.O.Box 14/Hudson, NY 12543) EW

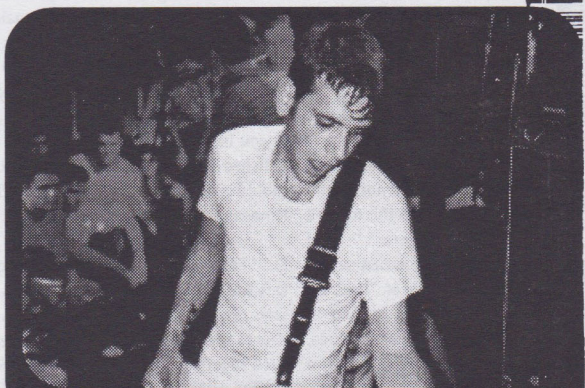
OUTCOME 7" Stompy deathcore from these self proclaimed "leaders of the agnostic revolution" which strikes me as a bit pretentious. The packaging revolves around an apparent anti-God theme which is fine but if your going to stand for or against something please do it logically and with a solid foundation. The graphic sarcasm on the cover and the lack of explanation strikes me as yet another band trying to make their mark through the mockery and persecution of Christian thought. Decide for yourself. (SA MOB/P.O.Box 1931/ Erie, PA 16507-0931 & Confined/P.O.Box 771/ Eaton, OH 45320)

OVERCOME - *When Beauty Dies* LP/CD Every rare once in a while a band reached a remarkable level of maturity which captivates the listener in an awe-inspired trance. When that level of musical accomplishment is used as a vehicle for incredibly moving and thought provoking lyrics a phenomenon occurs that is beyond my explanation. Nothing I could ever say would explain to you how much this band means to me, or take you through the emotions I feel when listening to this record. If your surprised that a Christian band can mean so much to a non-believer then you've obviously aren't familiar with Overcome. (Tooth and Nail/P.O.Box 12698/Seattle, WA 98111) CH

PIEBALD - *When Life Hands You Lemons* LP The best word I've heard used to describe Piebald's sound is "romantic". This record is simply wonderful, it's got a sound that's easy to appreciate, yet unique enough to set it apart from other melodic bands. The guitars are strummy, the singing is lighthearted and

wandering, and the resulting feeling is one of intensity, but not sad at all. It's actually pretty uplifting, that's why I'm slightly surprised at how much I enjoy listening to it. The amazing thing is that these guys have been doing this for years and years, far before it was "cool". This record is simply a little more refined and their style seems to be growing increasingly solid with each release. (Hydrahead/P.O.Box 990248/Boston, MA 02199) CH

POLLEN - *Peach Tree* CD It's been almost two years since these power-pop virtuosos have made Phoenix their home and what thanks do they get? Dingy night club shows with more smoke than people and essentially a cold foot up the ass. Welcome to one of the most unappreciated and under-rated pop-punk bands of this decade, and welcome to the Peach Tree - their most recent collection of fast, melodic and catchy as fuck power punk minus any filler, and



Snapcase - by mariko jones

hopefully the turning point for these noble voyagers on their trek for some long-overdue respect and recognition. WAKE UP AND CHECK THESE KIDS OUT!!! (Wind-up/72 Madison Avenue, 8th Floor/NYC 10016) CH

RINSE 7" It's been longer than I can easily remember that a

hardcore record has moved me with such passion and depth of character that it sent chills down my spine.

off, side A and side B of the 7" are at different speeds, which is simply a dirty trick to pull on kids. Otherwise this record absolutely kicks ass. Three massive songs

per with a solid layout and fold out sleeve. Inside you'll find seven melodic songs with God and spirituality seeming to be an underlying theme, and a small writing about accepting Jesus into your life. Music is emotive and well done, some of which reminds me of Seam or Christie Front Drive, with the only inconsistency being the vocals which wander off-key and leave a little something to be desired. The last two songs on this demo are strong acoustic ballads with strings, and somehow the vocals are much more promising on these tracks. I think this release could benefit from some harmonies and

thicker vocal arrangements, otherwise a commendable effort. (no address given) CH



Ink and Dagger - by robby redcheeks

The gamut of feelings that Rinse displays through this project is truly commendable. Inside you'll find a twelve page booklet with lyrics, artwork, personal sentiments from each member, and enough emotion to keep you up at night. For those of you who are questioning your faith in hardcore, this could be your answer. (Concurrent/P.O.Box 55462/Atlanta, GA 30308) CH

ROSWELL 7" First off this is the Roswell from the East, not the San Diego-based one. Both bands are noisy and chaotic, however this Roswell has a less abrasive and slightly more focused sound. The beginning of "Heal My Wounds" comes tearing in with a rad Converge-ish scale, then winds down through a number of feelings. The vocals set this band apart, with sounds ranging from harsh screams to pleading calls. Don't pass this up if you're given a chance to add it to your collection. (Hydrahead/P.O.Box 990248/Boston, MA 02199) CH

full of style, originality, and a deep-rooted hatred of mankind. A beautiful theme. (Crisis/P.O.Box 5232/Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232) CH

SILENT FALL CD Outspoken anyone? My opinion is if you're going to rip off a band, at least you could pick a good one. The remaining influences range from suicidal tendencies (second song) to Empathy or another emotional hardcore band, but soon reverts to the mediocre stylings of Outspoken once again. I would judge this by a different standard if it was European or incredibly old, but released in 1997 and from Minneapolis? Who are they trying to fool? Maybe the guitarist Eric FoXXX knows, because I can't quite figure it out. If you like Outspoken a lot and you dig that studio-polished monotone singing sound, then maybe you should give this a shot. (One Percent/P.O.Box 141048/Minneapolis, MN 55414-1048) CH

SLUGFEST CD I'm proud to be a Slugfest fan. When this was released I picked it up A.S.A.P. Finally some more Slugfest material, although this stuff is nothing new to the band. Don't get your hopes up, they're not back together. The run down: Tracks 1 and 2 were written after the 7" in 1993. Track 3 was written before the 7", but was never recorded. Track 4 is originally off the demo. What it boils down to is if you're only familiar with the 7" released on Structure Records (tracks 5-8) than you've got four more kick-ass tunes to put you in that special groove. I once read a review of Despair that read "Buffalo's finest"... I beg to differ. Buy it now!! (Initial/P.O.Box 251145/West Bloomfield, MI 48325) TM

STILL LIFE/CERBERUS SHOAL split 7" This is Postmarked Stamps #2, part of a cool series of split 7"s that you should look into. When I first heard about this record I thought "Why team up Still Life and a Still Life wanna-be band?" However I was glad to hear that C.S. has grown out of that stage. The song features a trumpet, and starts kind of cool, although loses it by the middle. Oh well. The Still Life song was quite a surprise, it's acoustic - two guitars, a violin, and a voice are ample tools in the hands of masters. The song is sort of a tribute to their ex-drummer and is good enough to make the whole thing worth buying. By the way, the packaging on this is fucking cool, I wish more people would be inventive and daring with their records. If you are interested get this quick, cuz after 1100 copies it's gone for good. (Tree/P.O.Box 31840/Philadelphia, PA 19104) EW

SHAI HULUD - A Profound Hatred of Man CD/7" First

STAIRWELL - Painted Pictures demo Nice packaging here, professionally printed photos on glossy white pa-

STILL LIFE/RESIN split LP First off - Resin are fucking weird. It looks like one of those goofy Very Small Records bands until you hear the music. Lyrics are about puzzle watches (?), graphics are from tabloids, samples from all over the place, music is along the lines of a bad In/Humanity. Supposedly they are very good live. My favorite thing about their side was that it starts with a sample from that Filth side of the Shit Split - the clearing of the throat that starts that split off. Still Life is growing. I never thought they could inspire me like they once did but the fearless trio has done it again, this time with a new drummer, and a guest vocalist/guitarist on one of the songs. This sounds like nothing they have ever done before. I love it. I do miss the amazing booklets that used to accompany their records, however. Oh well. Still kicks ass on all the lame epitomical bullcrap of the day. Woohoo! (Sunflower Communications/P.O.Box 618/Moorpark, CA 93020) EW

STRONGARM - The Advent of a Miracle CD Strongarm treats music more like an artform than just music and it shows. Poetic lyrics and melodic heaviness that proves they spend more than one hour writing a song. This is the first recording with their new vocalist which was their drummer on the first album. He is definitely more angry than the first. There is no better record for those who like the new school but still long for the old. (Tooth and Nail/P.O.Box 12698/Seattle, WA 98111) JS

TEN YARD FIGHT - Back On Track LP/CD Lace up your high-tops and pull on your Project X hoodie because we're taking a time warp to the late 80's. Picture CBGB's, 1988, X's on hands, fingers in the air, and youth crew pile-ups high as the eye can see. For everyone who's lives were changed by Youth of Today, Uniform Choice, Wide Awake, Unit Pride, etc. and for those of you who have forgotten or never knew what hardcore used to sound like, this is a powerful and authentic slice of the past, right down to the

packaging. This makes me feel really warm and fuzzy inside. Pick this up and remember the way hardcore started. (Equal Vision/P.O.Box 14 Hudson, NY 12534) CH

THO KO LOSI - Not At Total War... Yet 7" Picture this: You're in hell, flames tickling the sweat as it pours down your wrinkled brow. Across a lake of fire you see them, two demons with hate burning in their eyes and a thirst for each other's blood. Imagine an explosion of violence, gnashing teeth and a barrage of threats belted back and forth as they prepare to end each other's miserable lives. That's Tho Ko Losi's sound in a nutshell, as far as lyrics are concerned, I find it slightly excessive that five out of five songs revolve around the vileness of Christianity. Some relate it to racism, "the clansmen have gathered to praise their white god killing and hatred endorsed by the lord", also one expressing the equally brainwashing effects of Christianity and Satanism, believing both to be mythological and used as a crutch for the weak. Other lyrics are simply absurd, "Christian beliefs don't mean shit ever wonder why god killed his own son". The printed lyrics are more an onslaught of angry words than an argument for atheism. The packaging couldn't get any worse, but my copy was a quickie for tour, not the real cover which I would like to see. (Ben Johnson/P.O.Box 27073/Phoenix, AZ 85061) CH

TORN APART - Nothing is Permanent CD I was super impressed with this band's live set, so of course I picked up the CD with high hopes, only to be let down. The recording just doesn't hold the weight of their live energy. The music comes off pretty average whereas their live set was heavy, with tight changes and exciting twists (such as the death metal growls) which come off sounding weak on this CD. The lyrics walk a delicate balance between standard and insipid, although they have improved since the 7". I can see people writing this band off as average, with this release as their only point of reference, which is certainly

unfortunate. (Life Sentence/P.O.Box 520703/Salt Lake City, UT/84152-0703) CH

TRIAL - Foundation CD/7" This record, for me, optimizes in every word how I feel about straightedge. No one could have ever written a more perfect album that encompasses the thought and emotion behind the straightedge movement. If you see Trial, thank them for putting into words what's always been written in your heart. (New Age/P.O.Box 5213/Huntington Beach, CA 92615) JR

UNAVOWED - Anathema demo Minneapolis based chugga chugga metal with a tough guy feel, throaty yelling likely to be influenced by Neglect or Judge. The recording is clear and solid, but the music is somewhat dull and repetitive, but isn't that what makes it moshable? I don't know, this could be right up your alley. (Unavowed/P.O.Box 141048/Minneapolis, MN 55414-1048) CH

UNBROKEN - Live in Dagenham 7" I don't like to buy bootlegs, but Unbroken has the power to manipulate my thoughts with their musical prowess and needless to say I caved in under the pressure. Three songs here; And, Razor, and In the Name of Progression, all performed with the metal fury you'd expect, solos, squeals and all. Other than a slight variance in volume here and there the recording quality is pretty decent - a step above most bootlegs, in sound and in packaging. (no label or address given - duh, it's a bootleg) CH

VADE/JOUGH DAWN BAKER split LP First off allow me to compliment the ingenious packaging. The concept is a giant matchbook, worth the band names embossed on the cover. This is some fancy shit, you've really got to see it. Musically these two Seattle bands definitely hold their own. Vade has a sound not unlike that of the Rye Coalition. Jough Dawn Baker has an original noisy charm going on. The songs are real moody and a little scary at times. (Henry's Finest Recordings/16128 N.E. 145th St./Woodinville, WA 98072) CH

ZAO - The Splinter Shards the Birth of Separation CD If you were so lucky as to partake in Zao's first CD, *All Else Failed*, you probably know what to expect. If not, then surprise, surprise, meet one of your new favorite bands. I still have fights with kids but I think this is their best record yet. Heavy metal best describes their music with vocals and drum beats

with ALL good songs! Imagine that. Well Carrie must have because she did it, and did it incredibly well. The bands are CR, Botch, Impel, Nineironspitfire, Screwjack, Threadbare, Coalesce, Indecision, Trial, State Route 522, and Jough Dawn Baker. Nineironspitfire covers the 2 second anthem "Dead" from Napalm Death's "Scum" album. State Route 522 does "Jumping Someone

Else's Train" by The Cure, Trial covers "Crucified" with the live backups "Skinhead army!" replaced by "Straight edge warrior!" and the best and most well done track would be Botch's cover of the B-52's "Rock Lobster" that'll have you clapping along like a go-go girl. All of this wrapped up in the most innovative packaging of 1997 makes this one feisty piece of work. Hand numbered and limited to 1000. Extra points if your number ends with 43. (Point Furthest from the Middle/Hardcore Maniacs/P.O.Box 11543/Kansas City, MO 64138) CH

utes two songs that I believe were on their demo. Both are good, kind of in the vein of 16th century emopunk. Horderon has a crazy style, screamy, I'd like to hear more from them. Sixpence are from Denmark, and their vocalist sounds exactly like One Eyed God Prophecy's, In fact they are kinda influenced by them. Half Banality, half O.E.G.P. Swallowing Shit is all about straight up earth, human, and animal issues(!) and sounds like Silence Equals Death on speed and listening to Drop Dead. Constantine Sankathi are typically known for chaotic emotional stuff; this time they focus on the emotional. Harmonicas are good sometimes. I like their song, it's good. Kalamazoo-core. Drift has a better song explanation than lyrics, but the explanations are good. If Union of Uranus' sound was commodified. Drift would play it. The booklet looks good (better than the cover in Cori's opinion) done in black and white with one half about the purpose of the record and Food Not Bombs, and the other half contains all the bands pages. Good graphics, good layout. The cover is simple to the point of being almost generic; two graphics screen printed it two different colors on a cardboard background. My favorite thing was the inclusion of more than one song by some of the bands. Good idea. (Anima/no address?) EW

Swing Kids - by Mike Genz

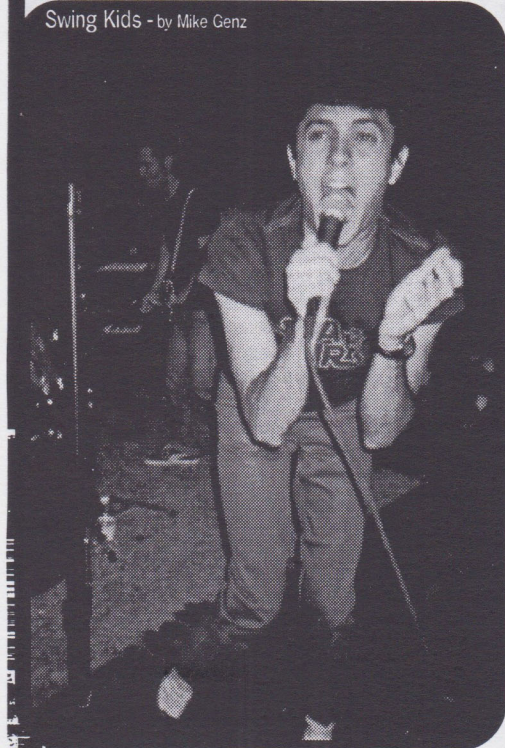
that make you want to knife people. You can't go on any longer without this in your record collection. (Tooth and Nail/P.O.Box 12698/Seattle, WA 98111) JS

V/A - ALL ABOUT FRIENDS CD Well, I had just about lost faith in compilations period. Not having seen a good one since the "Together" compilation had me convinced that I needed to let go of the hope that someday someone would realize that it's okay to have more than one good band per comp, hell, it's even okay to make a comp

I'll get this out of the way early: Food Not Bombs is an organization you can't afford not to support, and this goes beyond buying a record or attending a benefit show. Join your local chapter, or start your own, inject new ideas, fresh energy. Take the initiative. You'd be surprised at the impact you can make with such little effort. Activate yourself. With that said, onto the record: Anomie from France fucking rules. You need to check them out. Palatka does three songs of quick-core in their short tradition. Kathode is pre-Nema, they are not too exciting, their sound is Tho Ko Losi with a little bit of Uranus. I might like 'em a lot with a better mixing job. Insogrey contrib-

V/A - FOOD NOT BOMBS benefit LP

V/A - FRAGIL RECORDS #1 This 7" wins my award for the crappiest packaging I've seen since the last Gehenna record. It's really a shame because it's got four great songs (one each) by Prevail, Palatka, Eurich, and The End of the Century Party, and the potential to be something spectacular. There's no printing on the labels so unless you're already familiar with the bands you've got no clue who's who. It costs about 7.4 cents for each record to have the labels printed, is that too much to ask? To not have to spent ten minutes holding your record at the precise angle where the light reflects on the matrix and



you can barely make out a "side A". I know it costs ridiculous amounts of money to put out a record, and I don't mean to belittle this kids effort, but a little more time spent saving money and a little ingenuity with the packaging would have gone a long way. (Fragil/P.O.Box 442/Ladson, SC 29456) CH

V/A - IN WORDS OF ONE SYLLABLE LP The bands on this comp. include Milhouse, Tho Ko Losi, In/Humanity, Palatka, Wallside, Surface, New Day Rising, Hope Springs Eternal, Salvo Rain, Tomorrow's Gone, The Kelley Affair, Vanilla, and Braid. Most of the songs are just stereotypical representations of music, which is never too exciting. Most of the songs will start off good or end up that way, but never really hold their own all the way through. The In/Humanity song rules though, almost worth getting because of that. I can understand supporting D.I.Y., but when everything from the packaging to the ideas are just rehashes or imitations I cannot recommend it. I'm sounding too harsh; I like some of the bands on here, it's just that this particular record bores me, which is worse than anything in my opinion. Maybe it's just me, who knows, if you like any of these bands you might like this. (Catchphrase/P.O.Box 533/Wadell, AZ 85355) EW

V/A SHANDLE RECORDS COMPILATION Volume 1 The bands are as follows: Trademark, Chalkline, Chatham, Bipolar, Revolution-9, Digression, Psara, and Days After. The quality ranges from poor to decent, with song styles ranging from emotionally driven hardcore to metal. This gives a good sampling of these 8 bands (most have multiple tracks) although I don't care for most of them, but if you interested in any of these bands it's worth checking out for only \$6 ppd. (Shandle/7959 Mentor Ave. #G8/Mentor, OH 44060) CH

DOGPRINT

that gets cranked out these days. All physical qualities aside, the substance of this zine is uninspiring to say the least. The interviews with Ignite, Trial, Shift, Norm Anti-Matter, Tilt, Automatic 7, and Brendan Benson are just standard. The thing that really disturbs me about this zine is that there are writings in here about corporations and the damage they cause the world, but then the editor contradicts himself by printing pseudo-major label ads and doing interviews with major label artists. The acceptance of this shit really bums

me out. This zine exists to make reality of the co-option of hardcore by the mainstream, turning it into a product which can be bought and sold, and eventually disposed of. It's also free in Phoenix which is odd, because it's from NY. Weird. Also this mother fucker never made it past the 3rd grade or isn't fond of using spellcheck 'cause the spelling and grammatical errors make it almost impossible to read. Seriously, is it that hard to take the time? (P.O.Box 84/Suffern, NY 10901) EW

FELL ON EVIL DAYS #4 (full size/32pgs.) The best of the newprint

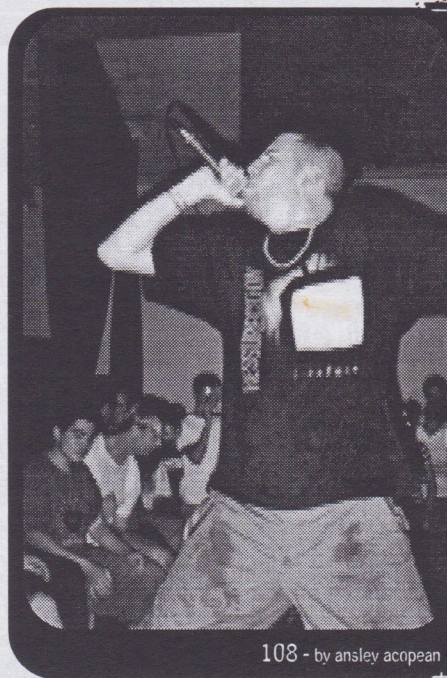
zines I reviewed, has some good writing, I can relate to it at times. Seems to be more dedicated to DIY. Interviews with Despair, the Get Up Kids, Lifetime, and the Enkindels. It's all pretty good, just not what I particularly like about zines. (49618 Nautical dr./New Baltimore, MI 48047) EW

HANGING LIKE A HEX #7 (full size/32pgs.)

Read above review for Dogprint, but it looks a bit better and has a lot less spelling mistakes, Reviews, interviews with Coalesce, Earth Crisis, Rocket from the Crypt, Jason Farrel from Blue Tip, etc. . . (201 Maple lane N./Syracuse, NY 13212) EW

SLIVER #1 (full size/64pgs.) This is quite an impressive piece of work. Full color glossy cover, ab-

solutely amazing layout, this has the word skills scrawled all over it. Excellent interviews with Vision of Disorder, Deftones, Rage Against the Machine, Norm Arenas, By the Grace of God, and Damnation A.D. Not to mention an amazing essay covering the issue of free will, one on health care, a conversation with computer virtuoso Simon Boy Genius, a spotlight on Secluded Universe's Leah Urbano, Reviews, Art, and so much more. This is really quite a publication. (Sliver/2300 Market St. #128/San Francisco, CA 94114) CH



108 - by ansley acropean

Sorry for belting you with such a lengthy review section, I guess that's what I get for waiting so long between issues. . .

nineironspitfire



The following interview took place at the famous "Main Street Denny's" in the grimy heart of scenic downtown Mesa, meeting site extraordinaire and the birthplace to many-a-fine interviews. Nineironspitfire, Ink and Dagger, and Botch had just wrapped up a commendable performance and shortly after a much needed hiatus to scrape cake and taco sauce off the vans we settled into our tables to record a few words between myself, Demian Johnston, Morgan Henderson, Ryan Fredericksen, and Dan Dean. . . (Brian from Botch joins in after a while)

Demian: Even though I'm not the most responsible person as far as those things go, because I'm so jaded, I just don't care anymore. I do look at the big picture however, occasionally.

So do you still hold on to those ideals which you lived by previously?

Demian: Yeah, I still believe in them. I think it's great but the past few points in my life have been so self-destructive I think I just stopped caring about anything.

Self destructive in what way?

Demian: I don't know. I've systematically tried to alienate every person but these few, and even that's a little bit tough at times. There's not a lot that's still making me happy except for what I do with these three guys. Things I used to be really psyched on doing - veganism, vegetarianism, straight edge, don't hold much joy for me anymore.

Dan: Except toys maybe?

Demian: Toys hold joy for me, but it's a

very superficial skin-level thing. I could take it or leave it. There's things that are still neat to me, but deep down things are just tough. So this whole interview I might just sound like a jaded asshole and kids are gonna hate me and that's okay. What was with the cops tonight?

They had a call concerning someone breaking lights or something.

Demian: W as anyone shooting lights out with the bee bee gun?

Ryan: You'd have to ask Dan Dean.

Dan: It wasn't me.

Demian: I didn't do it either . . . I'm having a really shitty night by the way. It was a really good show, I had a lot of fun, but--

What's shitty about tonight?

Demian: W e have this little van war going on between Botch and Nineiron.

Yeah, the sardines and--

Demian: The sardines wasn't it, a person in another van put cake on our window, whatever, no big deal. But everyone told me who it was so I confronted this person about it and he told me straight up, "No, I didn't do it." It's like I'm gonna be on tour with this person for six more weeks and I want to know that I can trust this person. And when I know that someone lied it makes me have to reassess our relationship, and I don't want to have to do that.

Ryan: And it puts us in a shitty situation for the next six weeks because we're not gonna know exactly what the hell's going on.

Demian: And there's other things the person said tonight that kind of make me wonder a little bit. I talked to him about it and everything's cool but for some reason I'm still fuming about it. I'm really up-

set that it even came to that point. I mean I love the van wars but they always go too far, someone always gets pissed, and something gets--

Dan: The taco shop in San Diego

Ryan: That was some funny shit.

Demian: I just got to watch you guys go berserk, that was cool, there was no lines being crossed. But these constant van wars, they get crazier and sneakier. . . [Brian reminds Demian of Dan's last psychotic episode]

Demian: Yeah, Dan was wielding this potted plant over his head like a barrel or a boulder ready to crush somebody. The pot shattered, dirt went every where, and he rips out the plant and starts spinning it over his head screaming, running around the parking lot, beating their van with it. [an ex-



moments of spontaneous action captured on film by robbie redcheeks

cessive amount of hysterical laughter has built up by this point] It was very fucked up.

Brian: There was dirt all over our van--

Morgan: Picante sauce everywhere, ketchup everywhere.

Dan: Washing our van is like doing dishes. There's gross food dried all over the fucking van.

Did you guys know what was up with your wheels or were you guys sketching--

Dan: What's up with out wheels? *[realizing I goofed a tried to play it off but didn't succeed]*

Dan: Too late, what's in the wheels?

Ryan: What's in out wheels?

Dan: You cant back out now.

I just figured you guys knew because it was really loud outside.

Morgan: What is it???

There's junk inside you're hubcaps, pennies and rocks. . .

of the van's engine and venting system]

Demian: It stinks. It stinks in our van right now. You've broken that rule. Any thing can go inside your van now, not only inside your van, but inside your bags, inside your equipment--

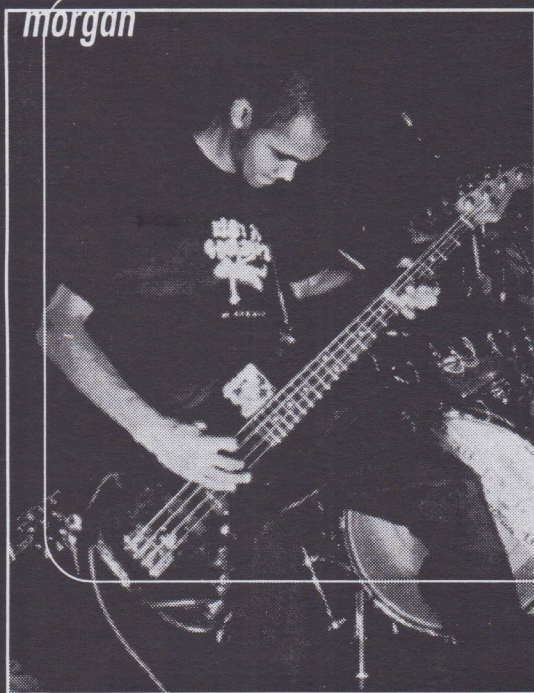
Brian: We didn't put anything inside your van though.

Demian: No. The smell is in our van.

Ryan: That can make us all sick. *[some time is spent bickering about the rules and etiquette of van wars]*

Demian: The point was, obviously, that we'd be driving, it would heat up and they would cook, and it would stink. It's not like we're hiding Easter eggs in your van and one day you'll find them and it will be funny. No, you know we're gonna find those things because we're gonna fucking smell them.

When we're sleeping, trying to get some rest on our sixteen hour helldrive through the devil's armpit - it's so fucking hot in Texas - and you know miles in Texas? It's like they get exponentially shorter. We'll be looking at the map after driving ten hours, we've gone four inches on the map. And we're gonna have to be smelling fish the whole time. The point of your prank is that we would stink, and it's gonna suck to drive tonight, and tomorrow, and probably for another week or two until the smell goes away, until they've cooked to a cinder and turned into carbon. So that rule has been broken, and I'm still not gonna play this game because I know it's just gonna get worse and worse until the inside of Morgan's colon is



Demian: You've broken the "inside of the van" rule.

Brian: What, the sardines? *[Botch strategically wedged sardines in certain areas*

wiped all over your clothes, inside Tim's glasses, it's gonna be bad, bad news.

Morgan: I'm done with this game, I don't want it to go on any longer.

Brian: If you guys have had enough. . .
Ryan: It's not a matter of having enough, it's a matter of getting inside our fucking van. [the group settles to resign the game and call a truce]

Morgan: Are there any questions you wanted to ask us?

Yeah, What are all you're feelings on the present line up? Does this feel like the final progression in member changes?

Demian: Yeah.

Dan: Oh my God! *[our attention is suddenly captured by Robby Redcheeks, Ink and Dagger's roadie]*

Demian: Robby Red Cheeks has just drank an entire bottle of A-1 sauce. You gotta have that in you're magazine. I wish we had a camera.

Unbelievable.

Demian: He does crazy shit all the time. He get's on Ferris wheels and jump down from car to car.

Dan: He does the funniest shit in malls, he'll run full speed and slide into a huge row of chairs and knock them all over--

Demian: It's unbelievable. Sometimes I'm like, "Uh, that's fucked up." But I still laugh, so I'm just as guilty. . . So what's important to you, when you talk to bands?

I tend to have a lot of questions focused on lyrics, I think. . . Did John write all the lyrics previously? And now that you've taken over on vocals have you done the same with the lyric writing?

Demian: Well, Morgan sings back-ups, and we write our own lyrics to sing. . .

And do they often relate?

Demian: Luckily they kind of do.

Morgan: We didn't correlate them at all, but they happen to coincide with each other.

Demian: I think we both have the same

kind of shit going on in our lives, from slightly different perspectives which probably makes things better.

So how about singing John's lyrics?



Demian: I don't. I've changed some--
I noticed some changes now that you mention it. I guess I just thought you were improvising.

Demian: I keep them in the same vein, but I change the ones I don't feel too comfortable singing.

Ryan: We've noticed that John writes a lot more to make it sound cool, then what he truly feels. He'd go on a thought he had and just try to make it sound as cool as he possibly could. It takes a lot away from the actual meaning, I feel.

I think whenever you're writing lyrics there's a balance involved, between the feelings and thoughts in you head and the representation of those feeling on paper, it's a struggle sometimes, for myself anyways.

Morgan: It just didn't feel like there was a lot of emotion behind his vocals. We recorded recently, and coming from my point of view, when I did my vocals on it, it was quite emotional for me. I wouldn't want it

From this point on the conversation began to wind down and plans for the night trek through Texas overtook any content worth transcribing. All were appeased with the knowledge of Reverend Demian

Johnston behind the wheel, armed with his bee bee gun and a Psywarfare CD to battle any vulnerability to late night fatigue. As I walked from the Denny's to my car my thoughts shifted from the situations of the three touring bands to that of my own, realizing that I had to get up at an abominably early hour the next morning, and I was amused by the psuedo-irony of the one specific Nineiron lyric that continued to race through my head: "And you think it's easy? Then close your eyes, and take my hand, and I'll lead you through my own living hell. . . ." H

ryan



any other way.

This was the recording for the Botch split?

Morgan: Yeah, and two comps.

When's that gonna be out?

Dan: If everything gets done quickly , then the end of May.

Demian: It's gonna be a good split too, The Botch songs are amazing, and I have a lot of faith in our songs. I wish it could have been done before the tour. They (Botch) were done on time.

Brian: Maybe that' s because we're the responsible ones.

Demian: You had your songs written, that's the difference. . .

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amazing demo infecting the
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slowly stepping towards
the light.

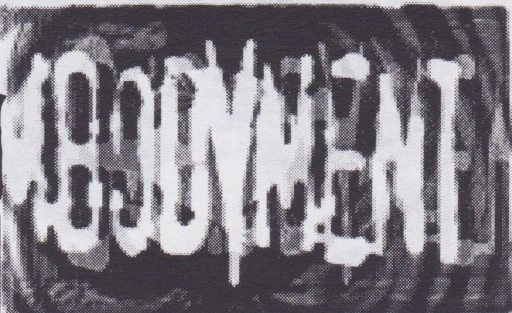
How about giving me a little history and background on the band?

The band started about four years ago, under another name, Supplication—

Like the Strongarm song?

Yeah, then they changed the name to Embodiment because there was another band called Supplication.

Were you in the band at that time?



No, I knew them all though. I played guitar in another band called Grey. They asked me to sing for them, I wasn't sure about it because I had never done that before, but I tried out and we played a show together, and went on from there.

Were you into death metal at the time?

Yeah, I was into the same stuff they were, we would go to shows together.

But you had never tried—

No, I had never tried singing before, I just got up there and did it.

So what's with the misspelling of the name?

That was weird, Jason our guitarist had brought up the name and it was spelled wrong. I don't know if he did it on purpose or what, but he showed the name to them before I was in the band and they were like, "It's spelled wrong." But they just decided to keep it that way. I guess because it was different or whatever.

A friend of mine suggested that maybe they just wanted the word 'body' in there, in it's entirety, which could lend itself to Christian symbolism and such.

It's possible, I don't know. It makes the name stand out more though. . .

Something that I've been wondering is if Christianity faces that same ostracism in death metal as it does in hardcore.

A lot of death metal bands think that it shouldn't be, that Christianity should never be involved with death metal. You've got that whole argument—

Yeah, it does seem contradictory in ethics, an a surface level anyway.

and if God intended for him to spend an ounce of time thinking about it He would have made it explicitly clear. There's a Bible passage that says not to spend a blink of an eye on anything of this world, and because Jason believes that animals don't have souls and are strictly of this world, in addition to the fact that it's not clear how they are to be treated, that they're no of consequence and as a Christian it shouldn't be any concern of his. Are you following me?



I don't see any reason not to be concerned, I know a lot of Christians that are for animal rights. I myself am not vegan or vegetarian, or anything. It's kind of harsh sounding but I'm not going to worry myself about it.

That's how Jason feels.

I'm not for animal testing, I think it's wrong, but I'm not gonna spend my time searching out who's causing it. If it was real clear to me which companies were doing that I might not deal with that company, but I'm not gonna spend my time in search of that.

I think that's terribly unfortunate, of course it helps to keep up with details, but it doesn't take any time at all to look around and see what goes on and decide not to support it.

I know what you're saying, I know some people who are heavily involved with veganism. But a lot of Christians think they need to be careful, that it might interfere in there walk with God.

Do you feel that as a Christian it's best to steer clear of worldly problems, in an attempt to keep from being distracted?

Everyone's different. It all depends on how you deal with it, if you allow it to become more important. I don't think you should ignore things though, it's just not as important as my salvation.

How do you feel about the Bible passage that says if eating meat causes your brother to stumble then refrain from doing so.

I don't think that relates exclusively to eating meat, I think it's about anything that causes your brother to turn away from Christ.

So say you've got a friend who's vegetarian, do you refrain from eating meat around him or her?

Right, that was the case at the Tooth and Nail festival. I went out to eat with my good friend Joel, he's vegan.

What about in a broader context, such as kids like myself who are vegan but not Christian, seeing Christians

around the world eating meat. That's gonna dissuade some interest in Christianity. Do you see the passage relating to that context as well? Knowing that your eating meat is causing others to turn away that you should refrain from doing so?

That's a good question. I'm not sure about that. . . **So tell me about Kris Mcaddon the graphic designer.**

Well, I've been interested in the arts since I was young, I've always been drawing and stuff. I started taking graphic design classes in High School, and got real interested in that. I've been working for a company called Fast Signs for the past three years, we do trade shows, displays, a lot of public relations stuff, pace cars for that Dallas Grand Prix. Recently I've done some shirts for some bands around here, and I've been asked to do some compilation CD covers.

And you did the demo sleeve right?

Yeah.

What about goals for the band? Where do you see it taking you and what are some things you hope to accomplish with it?

This last week, since the guys came back from Cornerstone, has been like getting our lives straight and what we want to do. Right now our focus is mainly on the band and the ministry, because we feel like school will always be there. Most importantly we want to get out there and do what God wants us to do, witness to these kids and share with them our message.

Where do you see yourself personally in, say, three years from now?

That's a good question. I want to start up school, and hopefully the band's still going, but if not I'll always rely on my art and stuff like that.

Do you expect to build a career in graphic design?

Yeah, I'd really like to do that as a career.

If you could spend one day with your best friend what you want to be doing?

What would I want to be doing. . . man, I don't know.

If you could do absolutely anything in the entire world, say you guys could fly to Brazil and pick nuts or something.

Actually I'd like to go to Israel with my best friend, walk were Jesus walked, I think that would be rad, maybe visit Golgatha or something.

Yeah, as opposed to being all gory and stuff. There are a lot of bands that are cool with it though. Locally we've gotten a lot of respect from other bands. We're not out here to shove anything in anyone's face or force it upon them. We just let them know what we're about and what we're there for.

Have you had any problems, locally?

We weren't allowed to play in Austin once, we were supposed to open for Dying Fetus but they wouldn't let us because we're a Christian band. Locally we've had some people come to our shows who yell at us and spit at us. It's just the people that don't know what we're really doing up there, what we're about.

Has anything ever threatened the continuance of Embodiment as a band?

Maybe personal direction, like if one of us wanted to go to school or something. But no, not really. We've never thought it would be the end.

Nothing too serious?

No. Jason left last month, but our other guitarist Andy has a cousin who's probably going to move up here from Galveston. He plays as good as Andy and he's a really good guy. His first show with us is going to be that Living Sacrifice show on the 16th of August.

What's your personal motivation for enduring and keeping it all going?

Just the desire to share God's word and his love. We'd be selfish if we didn't. We just want everyone to know what we've been without Him, that there's a lot more out there that the Lord can offer. We don't ever try to say that Christianity is going to make your life completely better, more often it will bring you to a whole lot of new problems. But that's what motivated us, we just want to share what we've found.

It seems that in death metal it's standard to, like you said, more or less create imagery through lyrics and to present a message void of any serious issues or productive ideas. As a death metal band do you find it in any way difficult to be outside the ordinary and have a specific agenda?

Not really, we've been seeing a change lately, it seems a lot of bands are getting sick of the whole gore thing. A lot of bands are getting more original these days.

Do you guys have any songs that address issues more specifically, as opposed to praise songs for example?

Well we have a couple of praise songs. Our new stuff deals more with issues like the struggles of living the life of a Christian.

Embodiment has been around for a long time now, but it seems that most people are just starting to hear of you. I was wondering

how you managed to stay unknown for so long and how things have been changing now that people are catching on.

Well, we're all fairly young. When we first started our parents would have to drop us off at practice and stuff. For a while we just played at churches and stuff, just for fun. It wasn't until recently that we took a more serious approach to it, and a lot of people have heard of us now which just freaks me out. Like at the Tooth and Nail fest I saw someone with our shirt and it was really weird. Also a lot of hardcore kids have supported us, it's been really cool. The death metal scene is not really—

Not really thriving nowadays?

Not that it's not thriving, it's just not as dedicated as the hardcore scene. I guess it could be because we've started doing a lot more, playing more shows and doing mailouts—

Reaching out sort of?

Yeah, God's been really good to us lately, bringing us to the right people and stuff. It's been really cool.

Was Embodiment focused on spirituality from the beginning?

Yeah, it was. We started it to be a Christian band, to spread the word. We knew that's what we wanted to do from the beginning. **One of my biggest concerns and problems with Christianity is that through my own observation and discussions I feel that as a Christian, with your focus on the afterlife and working towards to salvation of others, too often Christians tend to ignore the ills of this world (animal abuse, ecological destruction, etc.) because they've got something more important in mind. I understand that God should come first in your life, but it sickens me to see such pressing issues overlooked so easily. What are your feelings on the subject?**

I understand what you're saying, a lot of Christians are like, "Don't mess with that that's too worldly." It's hard not to though, we have to live in this world. . .

For example, my friend Jason's view is, as a Christian, because the Bible isn't clear on the subject of vegetarianism, it can be taken either way, he feels that if it was important

Complete the sentence: I wish all people would. . .

I wish all people would be nicer to each other.

If there were six more hours in your day what would you do with them?

Like if I had six hours left to live?

No, like if you could magically add six more hours to every day of your life, what would use them for?

Hmmm. . . these are some good questions. . . I guess I would spend more time in the Word, I'm really busy all the time and that would really help if I read the Bible more.

Tell me about the last time you lost your temper.

Something that I struggle with a lot. . . I guess it would have to be a while ago, back in High School. I had one of those graphing calculators, I spent tons of money on it, right? So it was messing up or something, so I pounded it and broke it. So that was eighty bucks down the drain.

I felt so stupid because I needed it the next day for a test and I had to borrow one from the school.

How would your father describe you?

I don't know. I don't think my father knows me that well. My parents had a divorce when I was three. . . I guess he would probably describe me as talented art-wise, because he's a photographer.

Is that about all he knows of you?

Yeah, I don't think he knows what's going on with me personally.

What about your mother?

Hopefully a good kid, I'm respectful and I care about her a whole lot. I hope she sees that, and I'm sure she does.

Alright last question, ready?

Yeah.

How has music affected your life?

I guess it allows me to express stuff differently—

Gives you an outlet?

Yeah, and I don't want to say it's changed my life, but it does affect it. Certain bands like Living Sacrifice, I'll relate to and understand what they're saying.

I would never hesitate to say that music totally changes peoples lives. How many kids were introduced to Christianity through bands like Living Sacrifice, or Focused especially? At the same time how many hardcore kids would never have been introduced to veganism and vegetarianism or any envi-

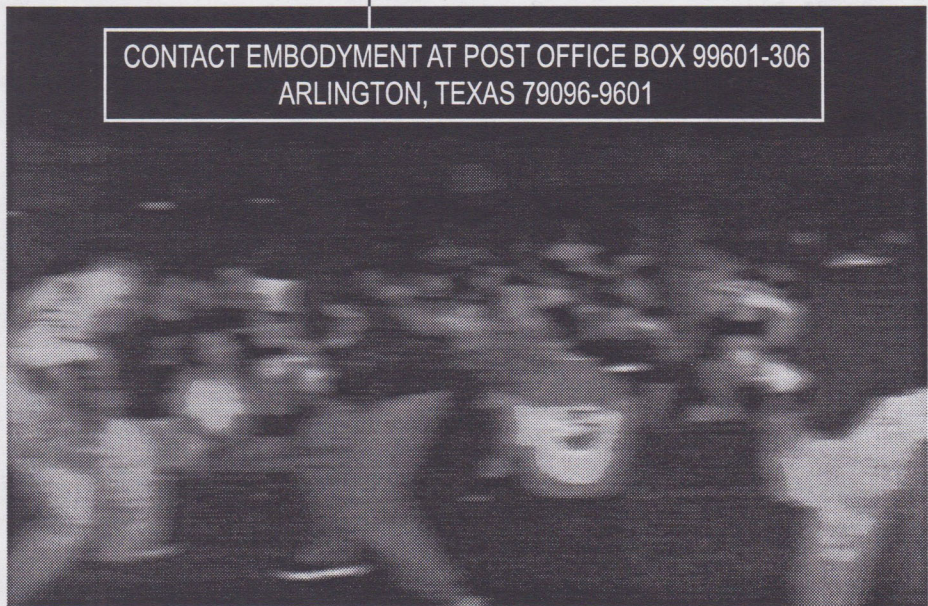
ronmental issues were it not for hardcore. I think it definitely has profound effects on the lives of people, especially younger people. . . [silence]. . . I guess that's it, is there anything you want to say or add?

I guess thanks for doing the interview, I think it's really cool what your doing.

Thank you.

Thanks to all the bands that have supported us, and to you and to all the guys from Overcome for spreading our tape around. And thanks to all the bands that take a stand for what they believe, no matter what the circumstances, especially Christian bands that still stand up for Jesus Christ no matter what. [H]

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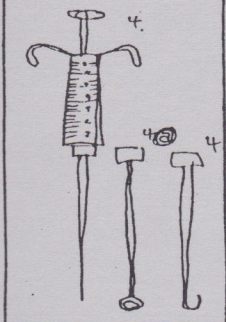
her iron men march rigid-
each count pounds in my skull like heavy boots on a ~~light~~ wood
staircase.

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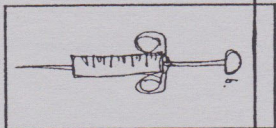
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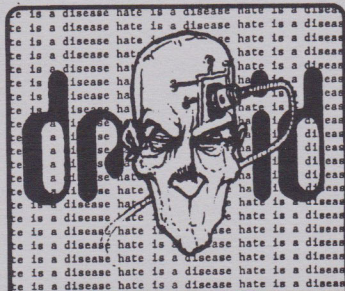
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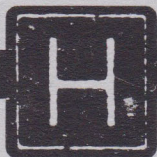
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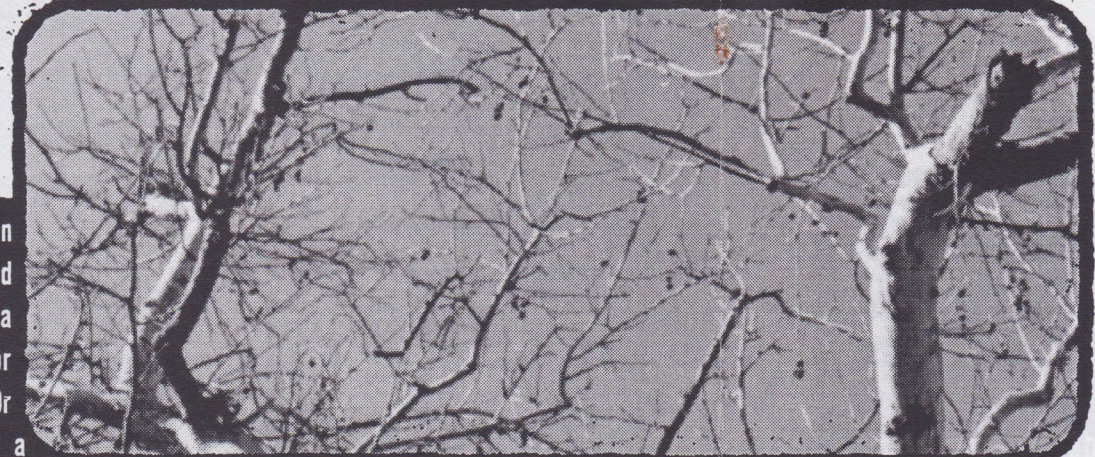
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Step 1: The Bands

If this is your first show the best route to take is all local bands, that way no matter what happens, nobody's screwed. Pick a date and gather up some bands. Most people have varying theories on keeping line-ups strict to one style, or diversifying as much as possible. Keeping shows too linear caters to those with narrow planes of musical support, and encourages scene division (unifying that small group tightly, while inherently excluding others). Varying bands styles too drastically is sure to flop (each band will play for their friends who leave immediately afterwards to be replaced with the next band and their friends). Most kids won't stay through a bunch of bands they've never heard of. My theory is to find a balance somewhere in the middle, introducing groups of kids to new music without scaring them away, and giving them the opportunity to meet people they otherwise wouldn't. Keep in mind that these are just my thoughts, and nothing concrete, situations will vary greatly from scene to scene.

Once you've been doing shows for a while (and if you take care of your bands) your name will get sifted through the mighty colander of hardcore networking, via mail, telephone and internet, and things will happen in a different order. Bands will begin to call you and ask you to set up a show for them. Ask them if any other bands will be with them, when they'll be here, if they'll need a place

Now that you know what to start looking for a place to throw. Depending on your area this could be a step. Think about what kind of venue you want, what the turn out will be, what the most likely come, etc. and plan your show. If you're lucky your area has a kid-friendly venue so that's usually your best avenue. Some local clubs (stick to safe and sane venues), Boys and Girls clubs, recreation centers, be creative, you never know what venues are always great too, just start with the neighbors first. See that the venue is appropriate according to your estimate.

When you find a venue you need to figure out a few things out. Clubs usually will need: door persons, sound equipment, tables for merchandise, etc. If you have a house or record store you'll need to take care of yourself. Clubs will cost more but less hassle and houses are vice versa. Figure out the costs and weigh the consequences.

Step 3: The Setup

Now is when you put your plan to the test. Decide what other bands you want (if any). Remember the bands you want to get heard. If nobody knows who they are, they won't come, so put them up with local bands of a similar style to draw kids to